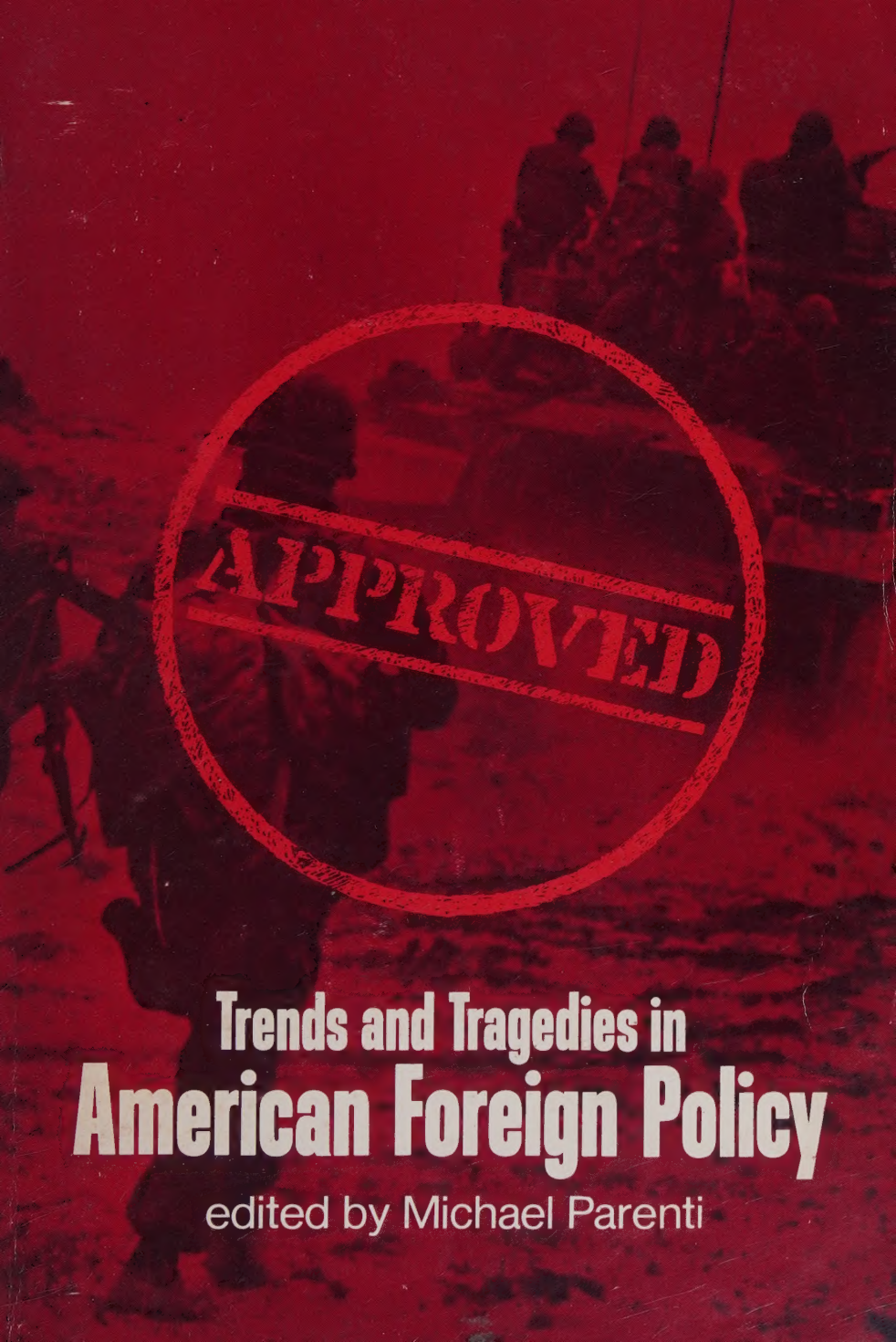

Trends and Tragedies in American Foreign Policy

edited by Michael Parenti

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Edited by
MICHAEL PARENTI
University of Vermont

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Preface

Teachers and students of political science evince increasing dissatisfaction with the quality of readings available for classroom work. They are aware that much conventional political science of the last two decades either bears little relevance to the major political questions of our time or treats crucial issues in an evasive or essentially conservative manner.

Trends and Tragedies in American Foreign Policy is intended to help redress this imbalance in our literature. Rather than add their voices to the "great celebration" of "our most perfect system," the contributing authors court dissenting and heterodox views. They intend to engage in, rather than to flee from, relevant political analysis and controversy; to explore more heretical and less establishmentarian perspectives; and to redirect attention to the fundamental problems of conflict, exploitation, oppression, change, power, and vested interest, which compose so many of the unhappy realities of our world.

This book is intended for use in a variety of courses, including American government, American politics, contemporary issues, social problems, and introductory courses in political science. I hope that it will do a small part in bringing about a badly needed reawakening in university education.

Michael Parenti

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Trends and Tragedies in American Foreign Policy

introduction

New Perspectives

Michael Parenti

American foreign policy can be studied from different perspectives and for different purposes. In keeping with current academic conventions, one might want to focus on the *processes* involved in formulating decisions, emphasizing the interplay among key congressional figures, "opinion leaders," executive agencies, etc., while giving attention to the *content* of actual policies only to the extent that such content can be treated as one among many variables that affect the process. Such an approach is intended to enable us to construct models that help us locate systematically the generalizable and predictable factors influencing the decision-making process. By concentrating on those activities which bear directly on policy making, however, one sometimes neglects the wider interests and forces that might exercise a crucial, more lasting influence. Certain values, images, and presumptions—because they are expressions of the class, institutional, and ideological interests of the decision makers (and of the researchers)—are rarely treated as independent variables defining interests imposed by participants in the decision process.

Furthermore, the emphasis on input factors closely related to the official making of decisions, often leads one to underplay or completely ignore policy outputs. Analysis of the actual effects of policies and of their repercussions on future policy options is usually left to news media pundits. Why policy makers do not consider alternative directions or start from alternative premises, and why they choose to operate under particular value assumptions, are questions that could use systematic *empirical* investigation,

but they are seldom, if ever, posed. Often it is implicitly assumed that America's role in the world is beneficial and that the ends of American policy are desirable. Therefore, the task is merely to study the procedures that help maximize the goals that create policies presumed to be ipso facto of positive social value; in short, the dedication is not to the study of policy, but to the study of policy formation.

Another approach, commonly taken by news analysts, policy makers, and others responsive to the pressure of events, is to treat immediate occurrences as issues more or less divorced from repeatable and generalizable processes, with their own particularities and personalities, again giving little thought to wider social variables. Usually devoid of analysis that might link specific events to more enduring and less ideographic phenomena, case studies utilizing this mode of investigation easily become dated, as might any such presentation of current events.

This topical approach, unlike the decision-making model-building approach, strongly emphasizes policy outputs and gives explicit evaluative attention to policy content. But the willingness to deal with value questions does not mean that there is any thorough and critical evaluation of the basic images and assumptions underlying American policy. As with those who focus on the decision process, the current events pundits retain a view that is implicit but deeply imbued with the orthodoxy of American objectives. Policy outcomes are explicitly evaluated but from premises that make a host of implicit and unexamined assumptions about America's virtuous intentions and world responsibilities.

The selections in this book adhere to neither the decision-making nor the topical approaches, although they contain qualities of both, while attempting to avoid their major deficiencies. The emphasis in this book is not on the intricacies and particulars of the decision-making process as represented by the interactions among public actors; rather it is on issues, descriptive events, concrete conditions, and policy content. At the same time, the issues are placed in a historical and systemic context supported by analyses of long-range developments and of the underlying dynamics of national power, social myth, and elite interests. The questions treated herein, then, may not be always topical, but, I believe, they are always relevant.

Our purpose is to arrive at a better understanding of why and how the United States became involved in the world today, and of the nature of that involvement. Policy makers' explanations of America's global involvement, viz., defending the Free World, extending social and economic opportunity to less fortunate peoples, maintaining our national security, exercising the responsibilities of world leadership, have been questioned by growing numbers of Americans who realize that reliable explanations for the tragedies of our foreign policy are not forthcoming from the men who perpetrate such tragedies. Nor are reliable explanations offered by many of the men who supposedly study American policy with scholarly detachment. Reflecting on the literature, Conor Cruise O'Brien was moved to observe:

> There has been, so far as I know, no satisfactory study of the relation of America's wealth and power to the economic, social, and political life of the rest of the world. Conventional academic approaches to this question are normally concerned, consciously or unconsciously, with minimizing or exercising, the concept of America as an imperialist power. One can have so-called political "area studies" of places which are in fact under American indirect rule, and these area studies can simply ignore that fact, and write of Russian or Chinese attempts to find a foothold in countries which are misleadingly presented as genuinely independent. *Scholarship of this kind is in fact a part of the phenomenon which it suppresses from view—a part of imperialism.* It is a form of academic activity which still continues, but has had to be conducted with somewhat more subtlety and discretion in recent years, with the increasing consciousness of the degree to which the intellectual and academic communities have been manipulated by the great corporations, and by government agencies like the C.I.A. serving the same corporate interests.[1] [Emphasis added.]

In this book we examine some long-muted dissenting notions and heretical views about the intent, purposes, and unhappy consequences of American foreign policy and the interests that shape that policy. We explore the history of American expansionism, the origins and causes of the cold war—that most critical international conflict—the interests that keep the United States involved

[1] Conor Cruise O'Brien, "America First," *New York Review of Books*, vol. 14, January 29, 1970, p. 8.

in so many places, in so many ways, and the effects of those interests on other nations. Then we investigate specific instances of American involvement to identify the stakes, the justifications, and the outcomes. Finally, in a concluding essay, I suggest an alternative interpretation of America's role in the world.

part one

Expansionism and Cold War: A Matter of Some History

It is commonly believed that the United States was an isolationist nation throughout most of its history, and that only after World War II did it assume—with much reluctance—the burdens of world leadership thrust upon it. Who, in fact, did the thrusting is not always specified; sometimes it was thought that "destiny" or the "necessities of world power" were the generating forces; sometimes it was suggested that our involvement came at the call of smaller, "lesser" nations seeking our guidance, succor, and protection. Most commonly (and not exclusive of the above explanations) it has been assumed that America moved toward its newly expanding role in response to the postwar "Soviet challenge," our goal being to contain Soviet imperialism so that we might preserve our own freedom and security, an argument familiar to all Americans.

A contrasting view is offered in the articles in this section. In the first selection, a slightly revised chapter from my book *The Anti-Communist Impulse,* I have tried to demonstrate that America's recent interventionism is not a departure from some previous isolationist tradition. Rather, postwar American policy is an extension of a historical commitment to expansion and intervention on behalf of the flag and the dollar, dating back to the earliest days of the Republic.

The reading by D. F. Fleming, from his *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917–1950,* one of the earliest of the "revisionist" analyses of United States-Soviet relations, shows that

the cold war began not in 1945, as an American response to Soviet incursions in Eastern Europe, but soon after the Russian revolution of 1917, when western bourgeois leaders attempted to overthrow the socialist government in Russia by direct military intervention and by aiding the counter-revolutionary Czarist (White) armies in a conflict that came to be a most costly and protracted civil war. Fleming records how the ruling elements in America brought the cold war home by instituting a full-scale oppression against domestic radicals during the Red Scare of 1918–1920, propagating the myths and stereotypes that have become the stock images of present-day anti-communism. Fleming further points out how anti-communist considerations dictated a continually antagonistic policy by the western nations toward the Soviets during the early interwar period, as manifested by attempts to isolate and weaken the Soviet government through various economic and diplomatic means.

The third reading, a selection from David Horowitz's *The Free World Colossus*, questions the containment theory and suggests that the aggressive initiatives that precipitated the east-west conflict after World War II came principally not from the Soviets, but from the Americans. American policy was designed to roll back the Russians from Eastern Europe, set up anti-Soviet governments in adjacent countries, ignore Soviet overtures for more conciliatory arrangements (equating all diplomatic compromise with "appeasement"), surround the Russians with a ring of long-range nuclear bomber bases, and re-arm and refortify Western Germany, while all the time accusing the Russians of implacably aggressive designs in Western Europe. American policy in 1945–1948, Horowitz concludes, did little to assuage Russian fears of the West and much to initiate the worst antagonisms of the postwar years.

Virtue Faces the World, 1787–1945

Michael Parenti

What follows is neither a comprehensive history of American foreign policy, nor an unearthing of new historical facts, but an attempt to show that the picture Americans have of their own international behavior is colored by a presumption of virtue rarely justified by history, and that this presumption leads to effects varying widely from the professed intent. This self-serving image of national virtue, while markedly pronounced, is hardly unique to America, but America is unique in the magnitude of its powers; its national illusions—unlike those of smaller nations—represent a force of great moment for the well-being and survival of all humanity.

The history of the United States has been one of territorial, commercial, and military expansion. This statement alone would jar many American readers, yet how else does a nation emerge from an obscure settlement of thirteen coastal enclaves into the world's greatest power except by expansionism? The American success story craves explanation: in a ruthless unsavory world how do the virtuous manage to be so successful? Or, to put the question another way, how do the successful manage to remain so virtuous?

As our common reading of history would have it, expansion was accomplished by a process of natural accretion: westward settlement, land purchases, defensive wars, reluctant acquisition

From Michael Parenti, *The Anti-Communist Impulse*, New York, Random House, 1970, Chapter Seven.

of spheres of influence, commitments to defend a weaker people, the protection of overseas properties and nationals, the enforcement of treaty agreements—such were the innocent, almost accidental, growing pains whereby the virtuous allegedly became powerful while keeping their virtue intact. Unlike any other nation in history, the United States apparently developed a mighty empire while never being sullied by imperialistic practices. If imperialism is admitted, it is most often described as a kind of momentary lapse occurring sometime between the Spanish-American War and Theodore Roosevelt's "big stick" policy.

In reality, from the beginning of its history, the nation suffered quite overtly from expansionist pangs. As early as 1787, John Adams concluded that the young republic was "destined" to extend its rule over the entire northern part of the hemisphere, and anticipated such expansion as "a great point gained in favor of the rights of mankind." In 1801 Jefferson, having seen that "the American people was a chosen people . . . gifted with superior wisdom and strength," and understanding that "God led our forefathers, as Israel of old," dreamed of a United States encompassing the entire western hemisphere.[1] Convinced that "God and destiny had so dictated" that Canada be part of the United States, Americans coveted the Northern British Provinces for half a century. Only after armed invasion met with dismal failure did we eventually reconcile ourselves to the idea of a northern border.

In the south we "rounded out" our boundary by forcing Spain to cede the Floridas. Although it is still "repeated *ad nauseam* in the school texts that the United States 'purchased' the Floridas for the sum of $5,000,000,"[2] a closer study of history would reveal that after a series of insurrections and territorial incursions, the United States acquired de facto control of the Floridas and in the treaty of 1819 promised to satisfy the claims of Spanish citizens up to the sum of five million dollars should such claims be considered valid by a United States commission. No purchase occurred and no money changed hands. In this way

[1] Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1963), pp. 39–40.

[2] R. W. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), p. 90.

America realized Gouverneur Morris' earlier assertion that Florida is "joined to us by the hand of the Almighty."[3]

At about this time our crimes against the Indian nations were gathering momentum. Some of the most poignant and most neglected passages of De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* give contemporary accounts of the heartbreaking mistreatment of the American Indians. In 1832 Americans knew what they have known ever since—those few who cared to look—that the Indian nations were being systematically obliterated, their treaties violated, their lands appropriated and their populations decimated by white America. Many violations are still perpetrated upon the surviving remnants of the Indian nations from the Seneca tribe in New York State to the Nisqually and Puyallup in Washington State. Yet for most Americans the Indian remains little more than a vaguely amusing caricature or a marauding savage. By Hollywood's magical treatment of history, genocide became cowboy heroism, aggression became covered-wagon doggedness and the roles of victim and victimizer, massacred and massacrer, were reversed. At the same time, as Commager observes, American history texts contrasted our allegedly enlightened policy toward the Indians with the brutal practices of the Spaniards, "conveniently overlooking the elementary fact that the Indians survived in Mexico and South America but not in the United States."[4]

Similarly, our views of Black history in America have been distinctly white oriented, and our understanding of slavery owes more to the perspective of the plantation owner than to that of the slave. The Abolitionists were usually represented as little more than unattractive troublemakers. Many of us were taught that the slaves of antebellum days, while sometimes treated cruelly, were generally humanely cared for by a rugged, inefficient, but paternalistic plantation system. With Emancipation, the history of Blacks in America in most textbooks usually comes to an end; little mention is made of the ensuing century of oppression, murder, lynching, terrorization, degradation, and ruthless exploitation. The Black man's position in America has been one of "internal colonial-

[3] Weinberg, p. 49.

[4] Henry Steele Commager, "A Historian Looks at Our Political Morality," *Saturday Review,* July 10, 1965, p. 17.

ism." Rather than utilizing the labor resources of the oppressed people within the confines of their native land, the colonizing nation forcibly imported them to the "mother country" as chattels for the sole purpose of economic exploitation. Nor did formal emancipation put an end to the exploitation.

Also overlooked in America's picture of its own history is the shameless aggression perpetrated against a feeble Mexican regime in 1846. Few of us were taught that the provocative advance of Taylor's army to the Rio Grande and an American blockade of that river instigated the first armed clash, a battle fought on the *south* side of the river. Van Alstyne's account is revealing:

> This successful manoeuvring of the Mexicans into firing the first shot worked out extremely well for President Polk. The date of the battle was April 24; the date on which news of it arrived in Washington was May 9; an entry in Polk's private diary under May 8, the day preceding, reveals that the President had already made up his mind to go to war. With an air of injured innocence Polk wrote, with apparent sincerity, of his "duty" to "act with promptness and energy"; but still he and his cabinet were ludicrously anxious that the Mexicans commit the first hostility. When the good news finally arrived, he had his cabinet all assembled within the hour, and with their blessing he was now able to tell Congress that Mexico "has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil . . . war exists, and notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico. . . ."[5]

It was Congressman Abraham Lincoln who aptly characterized Polk's story as "the sheerest deception."

Expansionist appetites were not quite satiated by the acquisition of Texas and the California territory (the richest half of all Mexico); for a time, the whole of Mexico was coveted. Until 1847, the Mexicans had been considered a shiftless incorrigible people worthy of being trounced in war and shunned in peace time. Soon after, however, almost every publication in America, pro-slavery and abolitionist, Whig and Democrat, was speculating about whether annexation might not be the means whereby America, as the Almighty's agent, could spread moral regenera-

[5] Van Alstyne, p. 142.

tion.[6] The New York *Sun* believed that "Providence had willed the war" to "unite and exalt both nations."[7] Expansionists observed that the Mexicans seemed to "deprecate nothing so much as the withdrawal of our army, and the restoration of Mexican authority." Expansionism as Carl Schurz critically described it, was anchored in the belief that "this republic, being charged with the mission of bearing the banner of freedom over the whole civilized world, could transform any country, inhabited by any kind of population, into something like itself simply by extending over it the magic charm of its institutions."[8]

The Spanish-American War is another monumental example of the alchemy that transforms national egoism into international altruism, and jingoism into divine mandate. Impelled by filibusters, arms salesmen, and a populace shocked by yellow-journalistic accounts of Spanish atrocities in Cuba, the American government moved peremptorily toward intervention. The specific textbook justification for entering hostilities was the mysterious sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor. In truth, there has never been any evidence that might implicate the Spaniards. Spanish authorities had begged us not to dispatch the battleship to Havana for fear it might precipitate some serious incident. "The Spanish government," Kennan notes, "did everything in its power to mitigate the effects of the catastrophe, welcomed investigation, and eventually offered to submit the whole question of responsibility to international arbitration—an offer we never accepted."[9] Soon after, the Spanish crown gave clear indication of its desire to meet our demands, including an armistice in Cuba and the early implementation of a system of autonomy. Yet such offers were spurned in the American press as "procrastinations." Congress by now was hysterically clamoring for war. As one newsman described the scene in the House: ". . . Members rushed up and down the aisles like madmen, exchanging hot words, with clenched fists and set teeth; excitement was at fever heat. Not for years has such a

[6] Weinberg, pp. 170–180.

[7] That such philanthropy never materialized into policy was due less to moral ideology than to the emergence of various sectional and political considerations and the reluctance to acquire too great a Mexican population.

[8] From his essay "Manifest Destiny," quoted in *ibid.*, p. 180.

[9] George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy 1900–1950* (New York: New American Library, 1952), p. 15.

scene occurred."[10] Congress passed a resolution, tantamount to a declaration of war, calling for the immediate withdrawal of all Spanish authority from Cuba, and directing the president to use force to secure that objective. Thus began what Theodore Roosevelt described as "the most absolutely righteous war" of the century. He branded as "impertinent" any European leader "whether Pope, Kaiser, Czar, or President" who profferred a less flattering evaluation of American actions—and many European leaders did.

America, from all announced intentions, was fighting to free Cuba, not the Philippines. Yet American forces swiftly wrested the Philippines from the Spanish Crown. The question immediately arose as to what was to be done with the islands. Admiral Dewey had described the natives as more capable of self-government than the Cubans, but as the great economic and strategic value of that territory became apparent, less was said about native capacity for self-rule.[11] McKinley tells how he pondered the question through many a sleepless night, finally falling on his knees to beseech "Almighty God for light and guidance," at which moment he was blessed with the revelation that

> . . . there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly. . . .[12]

Unfortunately the Filipinos were not put to rest by this vision, and their response to McKinley's decision offers a lesson that is particularly salient today. The Filipino guerrillas led by Aguinaldo, having been engaged in a protracted war for national liberation against the Spanish colonial rulers, saw the American occupation as a continuation of that same struggle. Commanding overwhelming military power, the American generals were optimistic about crushing the insurgent forces. But even as they assured the McKinley Administration that they were winning, they requested more men and arms. After some hesitation, the requests were fulfilled

[10] Quoted in Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1947), p. 509.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 517.

[12] This well-known and remarkable passage is quoted at greater length in *ibid.*, p. 520.

because, as the president proclaimed, they were fighting for "the world's best civilization." A war that began as a minor distraction soon became a major intervention. With 20,000 men already under his command, General Otis assured McKinley that 30,000 would do the job. When anti-war critics in the United States began demanding withdrawal from the islands, McKinley denounced them as "the prophets of evil." General Otis requested 40,000 men.

American forces found their superior equipment ineffective against a hostile populace. No matter how many guerrillas were killed, Aguinaldo found replacements. We drove them from the villages only to have them return the moment we left. General Otis asked for 50,000 men; his view was that most Filipinos knew we were liberators. He granted that many of them had been "intoxicated by the cry for independence and self-government," but he believed the terrorism of Aguinaldo's guerrillas had disillusioned them. Otis later requested 60,000 troops. He was now convinced that once he destroyed the Filipino main force, and secured the major population centers, the rest would be an easy matter of mopping up scattered armed bands. The main force did dissolve and became an even worse problem when operating as widely dispersed units. This was the beginning of the bloodiest phase of the war. Otis' commander, General Lawton, called for 100,000 men. McKinley denounced the war critics as "misguided."

Eventually the American military, now led by General Arthur MacArthur (the father of Douglas), adopted a new strategy based on the assumption that our enemy was the people, issuing a proclamation renouncing "precise observance of the laws of war." Among other things MacArthur permitted his men to torture prisoners, civilians included. Unfriendly villages were burned down and surviving inhabitants put in concentration camps. Only a few years earlier, when the Spanish general Valeriano Weyler, was doing the same in Cuba, Americans had called him "Butcher Weyler." But MacArthur was hailed as a hero, for he did succeed in crushing the rebellion.[13] The Americans lost many times more men than in the war against Spain. The toll of Filipino victims including civilians was tragically high. Throughout the bloody struggle militant American patriots who a few years before had

[13] This account of the Filipino-American war is heavily indebted to Harold Lavine's "1898 and All That," *New York Times,* January 12, 1968.

never heard of the Philippines,[14] steadfastly insisted that maintaining an American presence in the islands was essential (a) for the sake of national honor and national prestige, (b) for the future security of our nation, (c) to protect the Philippines from falling under the domination of some foreign power, namely Germany, Japan, or Great Britain, and (d) to bring the blessings of civilization and freedom to less fortunate peoples. Woodrow Wilson in retrospect, decided that the Spanish-American War had "awakened us to our real relationship to the rest of mankind," that is, "our peculiar duty" to teach colonial peoples "order and self control" and to "impart to them, if it be possible . . . the drill and habit of law and obedience which we long ago got out of . . . English history."[15]

The American empire that burgeoned in the Pacific with the acquisition of Samoa, Hawaii, and the Philippines, subsequently depended less upon direct territorial acquisition than on commercial control and expansion. Business interests hitherto somewhat indifferent to the opportunities in the Far East now called for their share of the new markets. Avoiding all references to Providence and "our duty to mankind," Mark Hanna asserted with refreshing candor: "If it is commercialism to want the possession of a strategic point giving the American people an opportunity to maintain a foothold in the markets of that great Eastern country [China], for God's sake let us have commercialism."[16] The Open Door Policy proclaimed in 1899 can be seen as a diplomatic incarnation of this new interest; its "equal commercial opportunity" clauses provided the wedge whereby late-coming American interests could enter into the "spheres of influence" carved out by other European nations.[17]

The Open Door Policy was motivated largely by the crassest materialistic concern: it made little impression upon the other powers, and was abandoned in a few years by the United States itself when discriminating trade conditions were promulgated by

[14] McKinley himself admits that upon first receiving news of Dewey's victory he had to consult a map to determine the location of the islands.

[15] Quoted in Van Alstyne, p. 197.

[16] Quoted in Bailey, p. 517.

[17] No power was to discriminate within its sphere of influence against other nationals on matters of harbor dues, railroad charges, investments, duties, and port accommodations.

the Americans in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Yet it was received in this country as a resounding victory for American diplomacy, and a defeat for European avarice. Secretary Hay was hailed as a great statesman, and as Kennan notes, "A myth was established which was destined to flourish in American thinking for at least a half-century," specifically that, in the face of European imperialism, the United States had altruistically and successfully reestablished the "integrity of China." If one measures the actual effects of our China policy, it becomes clear that the myth had little basis in fact and that the Chinese had slight cause for rejoicing over American interest in their destiny.

For most Americans the new markets, the expansion of national power and glory, and the uninvited attempts to "uplift the backward peoples" were part of the same divine task. The ebullient Senator Beveridge appropriately wove together the predominant themes of God, gold, and glory:

> We will not repudiate our duty. . . . We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee under God, of the civilization of the world. . . . We will move forward to our work . . . with gratitude . . . and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as His Chosen People, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world. . . .
>
> The Pacific is our ocean. . . . Where shall we turn for consumers of our surplus? . . . China is our natural customer. . . . The power that rules the Pacific . . . is the power that rules the world. And, with the Philippines, that power is and will forever be the American Republic.[18]

By the turn of the century, direct annexation of territories was no longer the most expedient way of enjoying the fruits of empire. As our experiences in Cuba and Latin America were to demonstrate, a great power could own much of the wealth, exploit the labor and resources, and control the internal and international policies of neighboring lands without troubling itself with de jure possession. The first move toward establishing a preponderate interest in Latin America came in 1823 with the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine, which declared an end to further European colonization and intervention in the New World

[18] Quoted in Van Alstyne, p. 187.

and pronounced all such interferences a threat to the peace and security of the United States. Americans of that day (and Americans ever since) treated the Doctrine as an exhilarating example of a young republic's magnanimous defense of weaker sister republics against Old World despotism. In fact, the continental powers, distrustful enough of each other, had little interest in direct political intervention, and any potential impulses in that direction were discouraged not by an American ukase, but by the presence of the powerful British fleet.[19]

More important, for American interests the significance of the Monroe Doctrine is to be ascertained in what was left unsaid. Secretary of State Adams and President Monroe had been reluctant to issue a joint pronouncement with Great Britain, less out of a feeling of national pride and more because of an unwillingness to accept the British proviso that neither the United States nor Great Britain would appropriate any part of Spanish America. With Texas, California, and Cuba still in Spanish hands such a pledge would have been a renunciation of all future American expansion.[20] What the Monroe Doctrine implied, in effect, was that the United States would be the sole political and colonizing power in the New World, and that the western hemisphere was to be an American sphere of influence.

Our subsequent hemispheric policies made it evident that we had no intention of practicing the restraint we preached to European powers. A year after the Doctrine's promulgation, Adams informed South American liberator Simón Bolívar that the Doctrine "must not be interpreted as authorization for the weak to be insolent with the strong." Bolívar, as early as 1829, mournfully and prophetically forecast the next hundred years: "The United States appears to be destined by Providence to plague America with misery in the name of liberty."[21]

Forceful intervention into Latin America began as far back as 1854 when an American warship bombarded a Nicaraguan port; three years later the operation was repeated and marines

[19] Cf. Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823–1826* (Magnolia, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1927).

[20] Bailey, p. 183.

[21] Quoted in John Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America,* rev. ed. (New York: Collier Books, 1963), pp. 226–227.

were landed (in retaliation for the Nicaraguan failure to pay heavy indemnities for the wounding of an American citizen). The following year Nicaragua was forced to sign a treaty granting the United States free passage and free intervention at will. This was followed by intervention in Honduras in 1860 and occupation of Samana Bay in Santo Domingo in 1871. The ensuing decades saw the growing dominance of United States commercial interests throughout Latin America along with increasing applications of military and political intervention. The forceful acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone by Theodore Roosevelt ("I took the Canal and let Congress debate.") was but one of some sixty United States interventions in the first three decades of this century. Here is a far from exhaustive list: United States troops in Cuba, 1898–1902; Cuba transformed into a quasi-protectorate under the Platt Amendment, 1901;[22] troops in Cuba, 1906–1909, 1917–1922; custom-house control in the Dominican Republic in 1905 to protect investments and maintain debt payments, a financial supervision extending until 1941, and troops in 1913 and again in 1916–1924; a military occupation to "restore order" in Haiti, 1914–1941, with marines shooting over 2000 Haitians who resisted "pacification"; military occupation of Nicaragua, 1909–1910, 1912–1925, financial supervision, 1911–1924, large-scale military operations in 1927 (Coolidge's "private war") and occupation until 1933; the bombardment and capture of Vera Cruz with considerable loss of Mexican lives, 1914.[23] In other areas, occasional warships, threats, one-sided treaties, and financial pressures made marine landings unnecessary.

The most morally impelled of our presidents, Woodrow Wilson, once said: "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men,"[24] and then proceeded to intervene most frequently and quite brutally into Latin American affairs. "We are the friends of Constitutional government in America," Wilson

[22] Under the Platt Amendment Cuba could not permit a foreign (i.e. non-American) power to assume partial or complete control; agreed to sell or lease naval sites to the United States; allowed the United States the liberty to intervene for the purpose of preserving order and "maintaining Cuban independence."

[23] Bailey, *passim;* also Gerassi, Chapter 17, *passim.*

[24] Quoted in E. Stillman and W. Pfaff, *Power and Impotence* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 27.

announced before the Vera Cruz expedition; "we are more than its friends, we are its champions because in no other way can our neighbors . . . work out their own development in peace and liberty."[25] With less lyricism, the much-decorated Major General Smedley Butler of the Marine Corps presented a different vision of good neighborly assistance: "I helped make Mexico . . . safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenue in . . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909–1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903."[26] Some saw no contradiction between Wilson's professions and General Smedley's statement—including Woodrow Wilson himself. In their view, to bring the energetic blessings of capitalism to Latin America was as much a part of the nation's sacred mission as was disseminating Christianity and constitutionalism.

Whatever the reasons for intervention—protecting American nationals or investment interests, safeguarding the Canal Zone, staving off European intervention, revenging insults to the flag, restoring order, safeguarding or teaching democracy, etc.—all such ventures rested on the presumption that the United States had the moral right to police an area as huge as a hemisphere. In almost every case, as Albert Weinberg notes, intervention took place over the strenuous protests of the native governments and went far beyond what international jurists considered the limits of interposition. But America had assigned itself—at the request of no other power in the hemisphere—the role of an "international police force" (to use Theodore Roosevelt's description), and whereas Monroe had originally intervened not to stop revolutionary disorder but to prevent others from stopping it, the United States now became the self-appointed guardian against popular insurgencies.[27]

The eve of World War I found American power predominant in the western hemisphere and substantial in the Pacific basin. The United States was not merely Mistress of the Caribbean, she

[25] Quoted in Weinberg.
[26] Gerassi, p. 231.
[27] Cf. Weinberg, pp. 414–416.

had become something of a balance of power in the world. At this point in history leadership was assumed by a man who embodied the American messianic tradition. Americans had always preferred to think of their actions as reflecting man's nobler impulses, but it remained for Woodrow Wilson to step onto the world stage to proclaim the American mission to all mankind.

To Wilson, as to most Americans, the World War in its early years was something to be avoided. "America," he noted, "did not at first see the full meaning of the war. It looked like a natural raking out of the pent-up jealousies and rivalries of the complicated politics of Europe."[28] Our policy consisted of an insistent defense of what we considered to be our neutral rights, punctuated by intermittent pleas that the European powers end the unprincipled blood-letting. Few Americans are aware that our neutrality was something less than pure; large-scale American assistance to the Allies, coupled with American acquiescence in the British blockade, drove the Germans to the desperate measure of unrestricted submarine warfare. In a war in which supplies and materials were of the greatest necessity, the disadvantages either side might suffer, were they to honor Wilson's strictures, seemed greater than the risk of American intervention. In the confiscation of American property the Allies were more persistent violators than the Germans, but it was the Germans who were taking American lives at sea; while the British had their blockade, the Kaiser had the submarine as his only countermeasure.[29]

The reasons for our entrance into the war are still debated, but what is significant is that once having decided upon hostilities, America changed its definition of the war itself. The very virtue that had kept us in splendid neutrality now demanded, in the historically pathetic phrase, "to make the world safe for democracy," the first task in such a momentous endeavor being a total victory over "Prussian militarism." The Wilsonian vision, anticipating the transformation of Europe into so many mirror images of American constitutionalism, called for a new world order free of secret treaties, punitive indemnities, and minority oppressions, and policed by a League of Nations. The very transcendent fervor of Wilson's convictions seemed to free him from

[28] Speech of July 4, 1919, quoted in Kennan, p. 64.
[29] See Bailey, pp. 641–646; and Kennan, pp. 64–5.

any sense of how such policies could be implemented in the face of the enormous complexities and chaos of the European situation.[30] At Versailles, according to British official John Maynard Keynes, Wilson evinced only the most ill-formed and vaguest notions of how a new European order might be built.[31] The story of his ensuing defeat and disillusionment needs no retelling, but there is a dimension to the picture that should not be overlooked. It is common to characterize Woodrow Wilson as a prophet who eventually found himself without honor in his own country, a tragi-heroic figure possessed by a vision for all men that few took seriously. Actually, Wilson's illusions were something more than personal. His belief that America was, in its origins, institutions, history, and international conduct, God's chosen nation was something few Americans doubted. That his people preferred normalcy and isolation to the League of Nations does not mean they for one moment rejected the Wilsonian image of a uniquely virtuous America, but that they chose an expression of this virtue other than the one Wilson put forth; just as the national expression had once changed from virtuous neutrality to righteous intervention, so now did it revert to noninvolvement. America's presumed moral superiority could be expressed either as a desire to abandon other nations to their follies, or a desire to rescue them. The American populace chose the first course, the Wilsonian interventionists the second.[32] But all operated under the same presumption that those aspirations and claims other nations put forth that conflicted with America's picture of the world were not really worthy of patient tolerance and respectful recognition.

Such was the nature of America's encounter with the world. Military intervention halfway across the world in Manilla, Sebastopol, or Chateau-Thierry one day, then splendid isolation the next; repugnance for the "meaningless squabbles" of other na-

[30] Thus, to take one example, it never seems to have occurred to Wilson that independence for certain national groups, e.g. Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia, meant the creation of nations that contained within them still other minorities, e.g. the Sudeten Germans.

[31] Stillman and Pfaff, p. 38.

[32] See Hans Morgenthau's "Globalism: The Moral Crusade," *New Republic*, July 3, 1965, reprinted in his *Vietnam and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1965), pp. 81 *ff.*

tions, followed by a holy crusade against the bloodthirsty Hun, followed again by a return to normalcy; from absolute neutrality to absolute war to absolute withdrawal. But whatever course was chosen, it was always the path of the righteous.

Something is still left unsaid concerning the isolationist-interventionist struggle. If after World War I the popular attitude strongly favored withdrawal from international involvement, can the same really be said of America's political and industrial leadership, including those who vanquished Wilson's League? If isolationism is defined as opposition to any involvement in international events, the United States was never really isolationist. The Anti-Wilsonians opposed the League's collective security system as an arrangement that placed international constraints and obligations upon American sovereign action. America's task, as far as Lodge, Hughes, and Hoover were concerned, was to extend its own economic empire throughout the world, and the League was neither necessary nor desirable for that purpose.[33] "Let us make it our policy," Lodge advised, "that what we shall do and when we shall do it shall be determined by us."[34] At no time did the "isolationists" seriously counsel an ostrich-fashion withdrawal from world involvement, nor were they any more indifferent than Wilson to the revolutionary upheavals that might threaten overseas expansion.

If the Lodge and Wilson factions were divided on methods (i.e. the League), they were in accord on the diagnosis: the liberal capitalist world was facing a broad revolutionary challenge that had to be met. From the beginning Wilson and most of his opponents shared a phobia of Bolshevism. That far-off revolutionaries in Petrograd and Moscow presented no immediate threat to American overseas investments was less important than that they challenged the "natural order" of things. "The Bolsheviks," Secretary Lansing told a concurring Wilson, "are wanting in international virtue." They sought "to make the ignorant and in-

[33] A smaller faction led by men like Senator Borah did argue from an anti-imperialist premise. Being against both political and economic expansion, they aligned themselves with the Lodge group in the League debate. In actual ideology and world-view Borah had less in common with Lodge, Hoover et al. than the latter had with Wilson.

[34] Quoted in William Appelman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1959), p. 87.

capable mass of humanity dominate the earth" and "to overthrow all existing governments and establish on the ruins a despotism of the proletariat in every country." Their appeal was to "a class which does not have property but hopes to obtain a share by process of government rather than by individual enterprise. This is of course a direct threat at existing social order in all countries." The danger was that it "may well appeal to the average man, who will not perceive the fundamental errors." The goal was to see that "social order and governmental stability are . . . maintained."[35]

The Bolshevik leaders, caught between German invaders in the west and an expansionist Japan in the east, made repeated overtures for friendly relations with the United States, but Wilson remained adamant in ideology and action. "I don't think you need fear of any consequences of our dealing with the Bolsheviki," he wrote a United States senator in 1918, "because we do not intend to deal with them."[36] Nightmarish imaginings of what the Bolsheviks might someday do to the world were soon treated as descriptions of what they were actually doing, thereby providing justification for American and Allied military intervention in the Soviet Union—an intervention which, Williams estimates, prolonged and intensified the civil war, seriously damaged the Russian economy, and brought a loss in human and material costs beyond anything caused by the revolution itself.

Forgetting his dedication to the principle of self-determination, Wilson told the British leaders that he supported intervention even "against the wishes of the Russian people knowing it was eventually for their good. . . ."[37] Thus did he initiate the strategy of permanent counterrevolution and help lay the ideological and policy foundations for the cold war to come.

While a few influential Americans opposed intervention on the belief that the Bolsheviks were willing to do business with the United States and were able to retain power in their own country, the great bulk of our political leaders closed ranks behind Wilson.

[35] See William Appelman Williams, "American Intervention in Russia: 1917–1920," in David Horowitz (ed.), *Containment and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), *passim.*

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 57.

"Communist Russia," Herbert Hoover said, speaking also for the President, "was a specter which wandered into the Versailles Peace Conference almost daily." Faced with a communist revolution in Hungary, Wilson and Hoover—despite their differences over the League—were able to work effectively together, manipulating food supplies and sending military aid to counterrevolutionaries.

The accusation against Pope Pius XII that he displayed only tepid opposition to Nazism because of his preoccupation with Bolshevism and that he even considered the Germans a potential bulwark against Soviet Russia, might also be made against many western policymakers during and after World War I. Secretary Lansing noted that absolutism and Bolshevism were the two great threats in the modern world, but Bolshevism was "the greatest evil since it is destructive of law and order."[38] The ambiguities of British and French policy in the Spanish Civil War, the western vacillations toward Hitler's pre-war expansionist demands, the unwillingness of western leaders to join the Soviets in any pact against Nazi Germany, and the United States' refusal to sign a nonaggression pact with the USSR and China against the Japanese militarists all suggest that the western capitalist leaders were ultimately more concerned with the Bolshevik specter than with the fascist threat. Mussolini's growing power was hailed in the American press in the 1920s as a healthy stabilizing antidote to Italy's problems,[39] and Hitler's rise was not viewed as any great danger to world peace. The American preoccupation was with the Communist international conspiracy,[40] and on the eve of Hitler's aggression into Poland, Congress busied itself with creating the House Un-American Activities Committee in order to counter the Red Menace.

The American reaction to Axis aggression was mixed. Some of those in circles close to Roosevelt saw Japan and Germany as potential dangers to American trade routes, overseas markets, and raw material areas. In 1940, as in 1914, large segments of the

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[39] Fred Isreal, *Mussolini's First Year in Office as Reflected in the New York Press,* M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1955.

[40] Specifically the Red Scare of 1919–1920, the Palmer raids and the emergence of popular and Congressional anti-communist vigilantism.

American populace defined the conflict as "none of our affair." Some corporate and political leaders, fearing the revolutionary upheavals that come in the aftermath of war, believed that America should concentrate on building an impregnable economic empire in the western hemisphere, while allowing the belligerents to exhaust themselves.[41] "The role of this great Republic," asserted Senator Harry Truman in 1939, "is to save civilization; we must keep out of the war." However, once Pearl Harbor resolved the question, we set about to save civilization by committing ourselves to a vision of victory that promised a total solution to the problems of war and peace. The United States emerged from World War II determined not to make "the same mistakes" again, dedicated to some untested idea of collective security and global interventionism, and convinced that "Destiny has thrusted upon a reluctant nation" the burdens of world leadership. The threat this time was said to be Soviet Communism and the stakes to be the nation and all of civilization. If Wilsonian globalism had lost the battle of the League, it had won the war of American minds in the generation after Munich.

2

Intervention and Its Aftermath, 1919-1933

D. F. Fleming

THE FAILURE OF INTERVENTION. When the last of the White debacles came to its tragic close, what did the West have to show for its intervention in Russia? It is difficult to point to any con-

[41] Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, p. 144.

From D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917–1950*, Volume I, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, pp. 30–51.

structive gain, aside from the possible holding of some German troops in Finland during the early stages of the Northern intervention. Otherwise the five great campaigns had all ended in defeat. For a while the Red regime was in desperate straits, ringed into an area of a few hundred miles surrounding Moscow, but always it won in the end.

The costs, however, were staggering. When it was all over Russia was devastated throughout her vast expanses, from Poland to the Pacific and from the Arctic to the Caucasus. Millions of poor civilians had died of abuse, hunger and famine, which was soon to claim millions more. Everything was in a far worse state than at the time of the March revolution, bad as that was. Hatred and degradation filled the land. The upper classes in whose behalf the war had been fought had been humiliated and broken in labor battalions, killed and scattered abroad to live in bitter exile.

The results of the Allied intervention have been tellingly summarized by Bruce Lockhart, who was the British Agent to the Soviets after formal diplomatic intercourse was interrupted. His conclusions are that by June 1918 there was no danger of Russia being overrun by Germany, that it was a mistake to intervene at all, that the consequences were "disastrous both to our prestige and to the fortunes of those Russians who supported us" and that they regarded the intervention "as an attempt to overthrow Bolshevism."[1]

It is well to remember also that after the Armistice the Soviets made persistent efforts to make peace with the Allies, on almost any terms. Between November 1918 and February 1919 the Soviet Government addressed seven peace proposals, "couched in the most conciliatory language," to the Entente Powers and to the United States.[2]

WAS BOLSHEVISM CHECKMATED? One negative dividend can be claimed for the great sums which the Allies expended in backing the Whites. In his fine history of *The Russian Revolution* Chamberlin reminds us that much of Central and Eastern Europe was

[1] R. H. Bruce Lockhart, *Memoirs of a British Agent* (New York: Putnam, 1932), pp. 311–12 (London: Putnam, 1932).

[2] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917–1921*, Volume II (New York: Macmillan, 1935), p. 156.

in such a state of disintegration as to be fertile ground for Bolshevik agitation. He cites the undoubted passion of the Red leaders of the time for world revolution and comments that nothing but lack of strength prevented them from supporting militarily Bela Kun's Red regime in Hungary as energetically as Britain supported Kolchak and Denikin. Therefore, if there had been no intervention, or if it had stopped after the Armistice, the Russian Civil War "would almost certainly have ended much more quickly in a decisive victory of the Soviets. Then a triumphant revolutionary Russia would have faced a Europe that was fairly quivering with social unrest and upheaval."[3] In other words, the interventions of the West had the negative advantage of preventing the Bolshevizing of Europe and of pushing the frontier of communism farther East.

This is a tenable thesis, yet the arguments against it are weighty. Without the arming and financing of the White revolts by the West those in the North and the Baltic would not have occurred at all and the Siberian and South Russian movements would not have been formidable. Indeed it is difficult to see how they could have been any serious threat to the Soviet Government. In that situation there would accordingly have been no dire necessity to organize a great Red army. There was more than enough to do in establishing the new Red heaven, without pouring all the energies of the infant regime into forging a mighty army, in a land already sick and tired of war. It was not until the crisis developed that the Reds turned away from Utopia and concentrated on war. They had paid the highest price in humiliation and loss of territory to get out of World War I. Peace was their platform and, having surrendered a broad belt of land in the West to get it they showed no tendency to reconquer it by force after Germany's collapse. Their doctrines of anti-imperialism and cultural freedom for all nationalities militated strongly against such an adventure. Far from attempting to recover Poland they freely offered a generous frontier. It was only after Poland sought to carve out a huge Empire in Russia that the Reds tried to carry the Revolution to Poland.

From the first it was the West which was on the offensive, not the Soviets. When the first important gathering of monarchists

[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 171.

occurred at Rostov, in South Russia, during December 17, its leaders were at once offered $100,000,000 by the British Government and 100,000,000 rubles by the French to make war on the Soviet Government. DeWitt C. Poole, American Consul-General in Moscow, also went quickly to see the White rebel leaders and reported, on January 26, that the United States should support the anti-Soviet cause.[4] It is difficult to conclude that the originally pacifist Reds would or could have created a powerful new war machine without the early and persistent intervention of the West. When they were encircled with Western-armed forces on all sides there was nothing to do except to go to war, and to make the war total.

Within the limits of the exhaustion and chaos which lay all around them the Reds waged the first total war. They had to do so in order to survive. In the fires of this grim testing time they also hammered out the machinery of the totalitarian state—organized terror by the secret police, the planned use of all national resources, nationalization of all industry, class war in the villages in order to feed the starving cities (which later ended in the forced collectivization of the land), a monolithic, highly disciplined Party controlling and unifying all activity, military or civil, and a powerful army, taught and schooled with every means at command.

These pillars of totalitarian state power might well have been erected under the Soviet State in the course of time, without the compelling whip of the Civil Wars. They may all have been implicit in Marxism, but it is altogether unlikely that they would have been built as quickly and strongly. Evolution in the Soviet Union would have proceeded much more slowly and, in all probability, with much greater moderation, without the scourging compulsion of Western intervention.

Continuing Effects of the Interventions on World Politics. Yet the biggest effect of the West's intervention has yet to be considered, the effect upon the minds of the Russian people and

[4] F. L. Schuman, *Soviet Politics at Home and Abroad* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), pp. 143–144. General Graves deeply resented the interventionist activity of the U.S. Consul-General in Siberia, E. H. Harris.—William S. Graves, *America's Siberia Adventure,* 1918–1920 (New York: P. Smith, 1941), p. 49.

the Red leaders. When war again engulfed the vast reaches of Russia, on the heels of the First World War, it put a strain upon humanity seldom borne before. For another two and a half years the people had to endure coercion, looting, killing, and worse, from both sides. Already impoverished and weary, they had to go through endless agonies of plague and famine in which millions died. In the United States few even remember that terrible time and most Americans never heard of it, but the Russians cannot be expected to forget. Such an experience is burned into the very soul of a nation.

The Red leaders, especially, were given every reason to believe that the Western world sought their extermination and that it would be only a question of time until the capitalist powers would be back to finish the job. They were presented also with a telling argument with which to justify all their oppressive regimentations of the Soviet peoples—"If you do not work and obey, the terrible times will come again!"

The continuing effects of the West's intervention on world politics are self-evident. The will of the governing classes in the West to stamp out the communist experiment in Russia was expressed in deeds which the Red leaders cannot forget as easily as we can. To them it was a long ordeal of fire and blood. To us it was a far-away incident undertaken with mixed motives and soon forgotten.

American Public Opinion Poorly Informed. Indeed the American people never knew with any accuracy what was transpiring in Russia during this decisive period, except very imperfectly after the event. On August 11, 1920, the *New Republic* published a remarkable analysis of the news coverage of the events here described by the *New York Times*, then as now one of our most objective sources of news. The article was written by Walter Lippmann and Charles Merz in a wholly constructive spirit, after studying the news dispatches in the *Times* about Russia from March 1917 to March 1920. The report covers forty-two pages which make up a deeply disturbing document.[5]

It disclosed that the hopes and fears of the men on the *Times*

[5] Walter Lippmann and Charles Merz, "A Test of the News," *New Republic*, August 4, 1920, Vol. II, after p. 288.

organization determined the color and character of the news about Russia. From March 1917 until the Bolshevik revolution the news, especially in captions and emphasis, was so optimistic as to be misleading. From November 1917 until the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk the news was "handled in a rather uncritically pro-Bolshevik fashion," on the assumption that the Soviets would refuse to make peace with Germany. Then under the stress of disappointment and danger, "organized propaganda for intervention penetrates the news" intensely for a month until President Wilson announced, in early April 1918, that there would be no intervention and, after a month's interval, there was another sustained campaign for intervention until the President approved it on July 12.

Up until the Armistice the Red Peril had played an insignificant role, but at once it filled the news and served as a new motive for continuing intervention. Lippmann and Merz considered this "one of the most significant things about" the drive for intervention. "The notion of a fundamental antagonism between the Soviet Government and the American is not insisted upon until after American troops are on Russian soil." Up until then it was a simple matter of preventing German domination of Russia. Then suddenly the tune changed and our "troops went to fight Germany and remained to fight Russians." On December 13, 1918, the *Times* asked editorially: "Having entered Russia for a purpose, why not carry out that purpose?"—and argued that our armies in Russia should be reinforced to "drive the Bolsheviki out of Petrograd and Moscow."

The Lippmann-Merz study granted the patriotism of the editors and newsmen, but in this period found "passionate argument masquerading as news," in headlines as well as articles. "The Russian policy of the editors of the *Times* profoundly and crassly influenced their news columns." "For subjective reasons," also, the *Times* staff "accepted and believed most of what they were told by the State Department, the so-called Russian Embassy in Washington, the Russian Information Bureau in New York, the Russian Committee in Paris and the agents and adherents of the old regime all over Europe."

The two investigators concluded that "from the point of view of professional journalism the reporting of the Russian Revolution

is nothing short of a disaster. On the essential questions the net effect was almost always misleading, and misleading news is worse than none at all." . . .

AN ANTI-RED CRUSADE IN THE UNITED STATES. In the post-1917 years many other factors added to the growing hatred of the Reds. The charge that the Red leaders were German agents was widely and stubbornly believed, and the Red peace with Germany was deeply resented.

In the United States these varied factors enabled fear and prejudice to do the rest. The Red Terror was always reported in the press luridly; the White Terror never mentioned. The Red attack upon the Orthodox Church as a political force was interpreted as an extermination of all religion. This offended the majority of Americans keenly. Equally devastating was the story about the nationalization of women. This idea originated in the mind of an obscure woman in a small Russian town and was treated as a joke in a Russian comic paper. Then in Saratov the Bolsheviks sought to discredit a powerful group of anarchists by attributing to them a fantastic scheme for a Bureau of Free Love. From these beginnings the story grew to a nationalization of all women and for months was assiduously taught to the American people as truth.[6]

During February–March 1919 the Overman Committee of the Senate conducted hearings whose effect was "to picture Soviet Russia as a kind of bedlam inhabited by abject slaves completely at the mercy of homicidal maniacs whose purpose was to destroy all traces of civilization and carry the nation back to barbarism."[7] This theme was hammered into the national consciousness by the strongest language which headline writers and editors could invent. Even the failure of predicted horrors to materialize did not slow the campaign. On October 31, 1918, the *New York Times* announced in front page capitals that a grand massacre of all Russian bourgeoisie would take place on November 10. When the date came nothing happened, but the widespread

[6] F. L. Schuman, *American Policy Toward Russia Since 1917* (New York: International Publishers, 1928), pp. 153–4.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 124–5.

characterization of the Red leaders as beasts and perverts continued.

In these circumstances nearly all questioning was terrorized into silence and the stage set for a nation-wide man hunt for all suspected of harboring the terrible Red disease. This grim hysteria was concentrated especially upon recent immigrants. "The hostility to immigrant workers, which had long been smouldering in the country, was now suddenly combined with hostility to heterodox thinkers and burst into a conflagration of hysterical hatred."[8]

Mass Raids. Unfortunely for the poor, confused immigrants, who had fled from oppression in Russia and elsewhere, the Attorney-General of the time, A. Mitchell Palmer, was convinced of the imminence of Red revolution. There was no time to lose. Agents of the Department of Justice were detailed in great numbers to infiltrate into radical and communist groups, becoming vociferous radicals but trying not to actually foment violence and disorder. Then raids were sprung, the greatest on January 1–2, 1920, when all the dragnets were pulled in during a gigantic operation extending from coast to coast and gathering in more than 4000 people.

What happened in New England has been described at length by Judge George W. Anderson in the Colyer Case. The head of the federal agents in Boston commanded a force of 300 to 500 men. Halls were raided, suspects lined up against walls, thoroughly searched and hauled off to police stations. Somewhere between 800 to 1200 persons were taken into custody. In Lynn thirty-nine people, half of them citizens, who had met to discuss the forming of a cooperative bakery, were jailed one night and in Nashua five were put in one cell without a mattress. In Hartford a number of people were arrested at a communist meeting and when their friends went to the jail to see them they too were promptly locked up as *prima facie* communists. At Deer Island, where many were confined and conditions were chaotic, one person killed himself before all the other prisoners and another went insane.

[8] Zechariah Chafee, Jr., *Free Speech in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Press, 1942), p. 196.

From all over New England people were shipped into Boston by train, handcuffed together and photographed frequently as they were led through the streets. All were rigorously questioned incommunicado, without benefit of counsel, and a "preliminary record" made up against them. Most of these people, says Judge Anderson, "were perfectly quiet and harmless working people, many of them not long ago Russian peasants." Nearly all were arrested and their premises searched without warrants. Many were held in jail for days until the warrants arrived. In Detroit one hundred men were kept for a week in a "bull pen" twenty-four by thirty feet. Bail was often fixed at $10,000, though the Immigration Rules advised $500.

In the end the Department of Labor and the courts released the great majority of the people arrested, and of those held few were deported—all to the chagrin of Attorney-General Palmer, who wrote contemporaneously that:

> Like a prairie fire the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution of law and order. . . . It was eating its way into the homes of the American workman, its sharp tongues of revolutionary heat were licking the altars of the churches, leaping into the belfry of the school bell, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes seeking to replace marriage vows with libertine laws, burning up the foundations of society.[9]

The comment of our leading authority on civil liberties was that "Mr. Palmer adopted the attitude of the men he denounced. Because the law hindered the result he wished to accomplish and thought desirable, he disregarded the law."[10] Chafee adds that some of the violent crimes which punctured this period may have been the result of the resentment bred by several years of harsh suppression of radical elements, both by government and private organizations.

Reaction Rampant. As an editor of *Harper's Magazine* put it:

> "Big navy men, believers in compulsory military service, drys, anti-cigarette campaigners, anti-evolution Fundamentalists, defenders

[9] A. Mitchell Palmer, "The Case Against the Reds," *Forum*, No. 2, February 1920, Vol. 63, p. 174.

[10] Chafee, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

> of the moral order, book censors, Jew haters, Negro haters, landlords, manufacturers, utility executives, upholders of every sort of cause good, bad, indifferent, all wrapped themselves in Old Glory and the mantle of the Founding Fathers and allied their opponents with Lenin.[11]

Even the Russian Famine Fund, the National Council of Churches and the Foreign Policy Association were branded as Red. "These people are in our industries, schools and to some extent in our clergy," charged Clayton R. Lusk, the head of the famous Lusk Committee.

One and all, the super-American elements of the year 1920 evinced their disbelief in democracy. They had no faith in the masses of their fellow citizens but regarded them as inflammable material ready to be set on fire by the tinder spark of some agitator. They disbelieved in the essential sanity and common sense of the average man and thought they had to control his thoughts and opinions by suppression, imprisonment and exile. Knowing little history they were more than willing to defy the dictum of President Wilson, who lay a broken man in the White House during this time of rigorous reaction, that "repression is the seed of revolution."

Then, as later, American conservatives feared that a few communists could suddenly subvert the Republic. In Chicago States Attorney Hoyte announced on the day of the great raids that a gigantic conspiracy had been discovered throughout the United States to overthrow the government. The conspirators "proposed to seize the business, the industries, and the natural resources of the country by direct action" and to establish a Soviet government.[12]

As May Day 1920 approached, Palmer predicted that on that day the Bolsheviks, hundreds of thousands strong, would try to overthrow the Government and plant the Red flag on the Capitol. The day passed without incident, but on September 16, 1920, a small horse-drawn wagon blew up in Wall Street near the offices of J. P. Morgan Company with a tremendous explosion. This confirmed the Red fears of all the alarmed people, though

[11] Frederick L. Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York: Harper, 1931), illus., p. 59.

[12] The *New York Times,* January 2, 1920.

ten years of frequent efforts to connect the crime with the Reds never succeeded.[13]

Socialist Legislators Expelled. In this atmosphere it was natural that socialism should be assailed. On January 7, 1920, just after the great Red raids, the New York legislature met and the Speaker of the House hailed the five Socialist members elected from New York City before him to charge that they had been elected on "a platform absolutely inimical to the best interests of the State of New York" and to invite a resolution of expulsion. This was promptly presented by the Lusk Committee, which for a year had been conducting raids, prosecuting radicals and filling "the press with a flow of terrorizing descriptions of the Red menace," and adopted, the five Socialists being hustled out of the House by the Sergeant at Arms.

In its passion to smite at all things Red, the Lusk Committee made no distinction between the gradualist, democratic, legal-process socialists, and the totalitarian Reds. All were damned together and 60,000 voters denied the right to advocate socialism by democratic means. Fortunately this extreme action produced a healthy reaction among conservatives. Charles Evans Hughes protested within forty-eight hours, calling it "a most serious mistake to proceed, not against individuals charged with violation of law, but against masses of our citizens combined for political action, by denying them the only recourse of peaceful government; that is, action by the ballot box and through duly elected representatives in legislative bodies."

Under Hughes' leadership the Bar Association of New York City, the *Tribune*, the National Security League and many other influential groups attacked the action of the legislature, but the New York Assembly paid no attention whatever to these remonstrances. Its Judiciary Committee refused to hear Mr. Hughes and concocted a large omnibus of vague charges which produced the desired expulsion of the Socialists from the Legislature by an overwhelming vote, too late for new elections. Then the Legis-

[13] George Seldes, *World Panorama, 1918–1937* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1943), p. 127.

lature adjourned, Speaker Sweet proclaiming the session "a victory for undivided Americanism."[14]

The Legislature was not amenable to reason. It knew it was heavily supported by public opinion, especially in the rural districts. Even the *New York Times* declared that the expulsion of the Socialists was "as clearly and demonstrably a measure of national defense as the declaration of war against Germany."[15] But, concludes Chafee, "the nation was saved. The American people, long bedrugged by propaganda, were shaken out of their nightmare of revolution. The red terror became ridiculous on the lips of Speaker Sweet." People began to laugh at the idea of a legislature trembling before five men. The spell was broken and sanity began to assert itself, especially in Washington. . . .

American Reasons for Nonrecognition. . . . The period of hysterical hatred had passed, but it was believed that the Soviet regime was not a government, certainly not a Russian national government, but a group of international revolutionists who had happened to master Russia and would use it as a base for overthrowing other governments. The fear of communist propaganda was ever present.

At the same time it was reasoned that communism was an unworkable economic system which must break down eventually. To recognize the Red regime would only encourage it to pursue this folly, so real friendship for the Russian people themselves required the continuance of nonrecognition until the Soviet Government abandoned its unsound practices. Anyway there could be no peace with a regime which repudiated its debts and denied the rights of private property.[16]

These beliefs were shared by the majority of the American people, including labor leaders. In some they amounted to a conviction that the two economic systems were so incompatible that

[14] Chafee, *op. cit.*, pp. 269–80. "Surely this event ought to free us from the tyranny of this word 'Americanism' which seems like some magic helmet to render the true qualities of the wearer invisible to those around him" (p. 280).

[15] Editorial, April 2, 1920.

[16] Schuman, *op. cit.*, pp. 276–7.

they could not live together on speaking terms. The Lenin-Trotsky theory that the world must be all one or the other was accepted. Russia was a pariah and the less contact with her the better. Even the Soviet Ambassador to Mexico, Mme. Alexandra Kollontai, was not allowed to pass through the United States on the way to her post. In November 1926 the State Department ruled that she was an unadmissible alien, actively participating in "the international Communist subversive movement."[17]

This attitude was fostered by the kind of reporting which the *Chicago Tribune* did about Russia in these years. Boasting on August 25, 1926, that it "alone among the great American journals" had painfully but successfully defied the "garbling censorship of the Red Government," the *Tribune* published a stream of articles which would lead its widespread readers to conclude that there was a never-ending series of revolts in Russia. Beginning in 1925, Schuman collected the following series of headlines in the *Tribune*:

Soviets Fight Famine as Grain Myth Explodes
(October 26, 1925)
Claim Starving Poor Threaten Doom of Soviet
(June 15, 1925)
Russians Free! To Rob, Starve, Murder, and Die
(November 15, 1925)
Siberia Tries to Shake off Moscow's Yoke
(November 26, 1925)
Russia Unloads Jewels to Save Soviet Regime
(February 10, 1926)
Secret Report Shows Russia Near Collapse
(March 20, 1926)
Uncover Secret Terrorist Plot to Seize Russia
(July 30, 1926)
Rumania Hears of Widespread Russian Revolt
(August 7, 1926)
Soviet Party in Chaos as Trade, Industry Totter
(August 4, 1926)
Odessa Troops Mutiny Against Moscow Regime
(August 9, 1926)
Russia Ferments as Red Factions Grasp for Power
(August 10, 1926)

[17] The *New York Times*, November 5, 1926.

Reds Reinforce Kremlin Fort as Mutiny Grows
(August 13, 1926)
Economy Regime in Russia Fails: Crisis Impends
(August 21, 1926)
Reports Revolt Against Soviet Begins in Russia
(April 9, 1927)
Red Army Fights with South Russians
(April 19, 1927)
Russia Calls Soldiers Home as Revolt Rises
(April 21, 1927)
Famine Strikes Russia: Poland Fears Invasion
(July 27, 1927)
Moscow Traps Cash of Foreign Business Firms
(October 16, 1927)
Industry Faces Swift Disaster in Red Russia
(October 23, 1927)
Trotsky's Clan Fights Soviet Police: 18 Die
(November 23, 1927)
Hundreds Die in Ukraine Riots, Rumania Hears
(November 26, 1927)

Schuman's comment was that the reports of revolts were "wholly without foundation" and the other articles "differed only in the degree of their inaccuracy."[18]

By that time twenty-one other governments, including Britain, France, and Japan, had recognized the Government of the Soviet Union, but that made no difference to the United States. A few radicals and liberals urged that we could not always ignore the government of so vast an area, but the great majority were content with keeping the Red contamination out of the country, officially at least. . . .

Soviet Promotion of Disarmament and Peace Pacts. Though not desired as a member of the League of Nations, the Soviet Union was invited as early as 1927 to the sessions of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. On November 30, 1927, Foreign Minister Litvinov presented a plan for general and complete disarmament, the discussion of which was postponed to the next session. In the following February he

[18] Schuman, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

offered another plan for total disarmament containing sixty-three articles, but only the German and Turkish representatives supported it. On March 23, 1928, he presented a third plan for partial disarmament but could not get a date set for its discussion.[19]

Soviet Russia was not invited to the conference of August 28, 1928, in Paris which adopted the Kellogg-Briand Pact, since she did not have diplomatic relations with the United States. However, she promptly accepted this pact for the renunciation of war and soon persuaded all of her neighbors to sign the Litvinov Protocol, which put the Pact into effect between them and the Soviet Union. The representatives of Latvia, Estonia Poland, and Rumania signed on February 9, 1929, and Lithuania, Turkey, and Persia soon followed.[20]

In the World Disarmament Conference which met in Geneva in 1932, Litvinov recalled Russia's efforts toward disarmament in a speech on February 11, 1932. He declared that the World War should have been the last war and that "what is required of us is to find effective means to put an end to war."[21]

In the summer of 1933, Litvinov drew up a definition of aggression to which the adherence of all countries was invited. The convention declared that "every state has an equal right to independence, security, defense of its territory and free development of its state system." Article II defined an aggressor as any state which should be the first to commit any of the following acts:

1. Declaration of war upon another State;
2. Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
3. Attack by its land, naval or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, on the territory, vessels, or aircraft of another State;
4. Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
5. Provision of support to armed bands formed on its territory which have invaded the territory of another State, or refusal, notwithstanding the request of the invaded

[19] Eugene A. Korovine, "The U.S.S.R. and Disarmament," *International Conciliation*, No. 292, September 1933, pp. 298–300.

[20] Malbone W. Graham, Jr., "The Soviet Security System," *Ibid.*, No. 252, September 1929, pp. 88–9.

[21] Yakhontoff, *U.S.S.R. Foreign Policy* (New York, 1945), p. 87.

> State, to take on its own territory all the measures in its power to deprive these bands of all assistance or protection.[22]

This Convention for the Definition of Aggression was signed between Russia and her neighbors, Afghanistan, Estonia, Latvia, Persia, Poland, Rumania, and Turkey, and was soon accepted by many other governments.[23]

All of these initiatives by Litvinov in the direction of disarmament and limiting aggression were heavily, if not completely, discounted by the Western diplomats. They found it impossible to believe that the dreaded Communist state really had pacific purposes. On his side, Litvinov doubtless knew that some of his disarmament proposals would cause embarrassment without being accepted. Yet there is no reason to question the sincerity of his desire to prevent another war. The Soviet Union had nothing to gain by it and much to lose. The Five Year Plans had provided a promising base for an industrialized Russia, but only the foundation. Both domestic prosperity and military security had still to be attained, and might never be achieved if the Soviet Union were attacked by ambitious aggressive nations from both the West and the East.

Growing Fear of Invasion. It was the fear of a simultaneous assault on the USSR by both Japan and Germany which made Litvinov a sincere advocate of collective security. The Soviet leaders had no illusions about their situation. They had read in the Japanese Tanaka memorial about "the inevitability of crossing swords with Russia on the fields of Mongolia." They had pondered Hitler's declaration in *Mein Kampf* about reversing "the eternal German migration to the South" and looking Eastwards toward new soil in "Russia and her subject Border States."

The danger in the East led the Soviets to put aside the humiliation of their ejection from China by Chiang Kai-shek in 1927 and renew diplomatic relations with China in December 1932.

[22] Arthur Upham Pope, *Maxim Litvinoff* (New York: L. B. Fischer, 1943), p. 286.

[23] James T. Shotwell and Max M. Laserson, *Poland and Russia, 1919–1945* (New York, 1945), p. 18.

In the West, Litvinov toured the European capitals in early 1933, signing nonaggression and mutual assistance pacts with France, Poland, Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, and by the end of the year he had covered 1800 miles of the Soviet Union borders with a contiguous chain of nonaggression pacts.[24] All of these were drawn in strict accordance with the authority and jurisdiction of the League of Nations.[25]

At the London World Economic Conference in June 1933 he collected the signatures of ten states to his definition of aggression. In the same gathering the *Hugenberg Memorandum* openly angled for support of German expansion at Russia's expense.[26]

The conference failed, and with it Litvinov's offer to buy a billion dollars worth of goods from the depression wracked West, if the creditors would grant long term credits and accept goods in repayment. Trade experts thought the plan sound. The Soviets had not defaulted on a single commercial payment.[27] However, the nations had so ringed themselves around with tariffs and other economic defenses that they could not easily take a return flow of Russian goods, even if they had not been nervous about Russian "dumping." . . .

THE SOVIETS APPROACH GENEVA. . . . The Soviet leaders had no illusions about their world position. In an interview with Walter Duranty, on December 28, 1933, Stalin hoped that the reasonable elements in Japan would prevail, but the Soviet Union was forced to prepare "because no nation can respect its government if it does not foresee the danger of attack and prepare for self-defense."[28]

In the West the Soviet leaders observed the roaring munitions plants in Germany and drew their own conclusions from Germany's resignation from the League of Nations in October 1933, following that of Japan early in the year. If, said Stalin, the League of Nations is only the tiniest device "somewhat to slow

[24] Miriam Farley, "Russia Warms to the League," *Current History*, July 1934, Vol. 140, pp. 402–5.

[25] Samuel N. Harper (ed.), *The Soviet Union and World Problems* (Chicago, 1935), p. 160.

[26] The *New York Times*, June 20, 1933.

[27] *Ibid.*, June 15, 1933.

[28] The *New York Times*, December 28, 1933.

down the drive toward war and help peace, then we are not against the League."[29]

This was Russia's reason for putting aside years of scoffing at the League of Nations as an aggregation of the powers which had intervened in Russia and only wanted to preserve the *status quo*. She now ceased to belong to the revisionist group and became a defender of the map of Europe as it existed. At the same time the Pilsudski regime in Poland revived its dreams of gaining territory from Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine and nursed its deep hostility toward Russia. Polish chauvinists convinced themselves that Hitler's field of expansion was really in the Balkans. Why not balance off Germany against Russia, and if the worst came go along with Germany, sharing in the spoils? Negotiations were opened with Germany and a Polish-German nonaggression pact was signed in January 1934. The ring of hostility which completely surrounded Nazi Germany up to this time was broken. Hitler spoke fair words about ending all differences with Poland. French and Russian diplomacy had suffered a smashing defeat, which was only partly repaired by the formation of a Balkan Entente in February 1934, including Turkey.

The real counter-weight to German ambitions was found in Russia's entry into the League of Nations, on September 18, 1934, after severe denunciations by Switzerland, Belgium, Portugal, and Argentina.

Of course the Soviet Union did not come to Geneva to save the League of Nations from disintegration and failure. The Soviets came to save themselves from attack, probably on two fronts. At the worst they hoped that friendship and cooperation with the western democracies through the League would keep them from being attacked by Germany in case they were invaded by Japan. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union could best save itself by becoming a loyal member of the League of Nations, by accepting the principles and rules for keeping the peace which the West had originated and set down in the League Covenant, and by trying to secure a better application of the Covenant than had occurred in the past. Soviet interests coincided with those of

[29] *Ibid.*

the League. If the League stiffened and kept the peace, Russia would be saved with it from the disaster of another war. So, too, would everybody.

On its side the West was compelled to accept the Soviet Union as a world power for similar reasons. She might be useful as a counter-weight to the aggressive imperialisms of Japan and Germany.

3

The Cold War Continues, 1945-1948

David Horowitz

Any attempt to clarify the immediate origins of the cold war must begin with the fact that . . . the United States and the Soviet Union, together with Great Britain, were working partners in a wartime alliance, and that within this alliance, the United States played a mediating role between the other two powers. The existence of this working alliance is a fact of central importance in understanding subsequent events, for it shows that the United States and the USSR not only could, but actually did cooperate in a dangerous and difficult enterprise, at a time, moreover, when Stalin was firmly in control of Soviet foreign policy. Although welded, it is true, by the necessity of the hour, this cooperation was maintained during a time of great national peril for the powers involved, amidst events affecting the whole future of

From David Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus,* New York, Hill and Wang, 1965, pp. 27–46, 50–59, 62–64, 72–74.

Europe. In the circumstances, it should not be surprising that the alliance was subject to significant tensions and strains.

Only a month before Roosevelt died, the worst of these conflicts, the famous "Bern incident," seemed to threaten the very existence of the alliance. When the Russians learned that Field-Marshal Alexander was to meet General Kesselring, in Bern, Switzerland, to discuss the terms of German surrender in Italy, the Soviet leaders became convinced that the Allies intended to make a separate peace which would permit German manpower to be shifted to the Eastern front. Roosevelt was deeply offended by Stalin's charges and by the fact that the dictator maintained the truth of his contentions in the face of the President's denial. Finally, a strongly-worded message from Roosevelt assuring Stalin that the whole "incident" was the work of the Nazis was accepted. Stalin wrote that he had never doubted Roosevelt's honesty and dependability, and on April 11, the day before he died, Roosevelt thanked Stalin and said:

> There must not, in any event, be mutual mistrust, and minor misunderstandings of this character should not arise in the future. . . .

Thus a working relation with the Russians was possible as late as April 1945, despite ingrained suspicions and the existence of areas in which considerable conflicts of national interest could arise. What then produced the collapse of this coalition? Ambassador Stevenson's October 1962 review of events provides an answer to this question which is straightforward and simple.

According to Stevenson, the conflict began "even before the nations gathered at San Francisco [for the UN Conference in April 1945]. As soon as the defeat of the Nazis appeared certain, the Soviet Union began to abandon the policy of wartime cooperation to which it had turned for self-protection . . . the historical record is clear. As soon as the Soviet Government saw no further military need for the wartime coalition, it set out on its expansionist adventures. . . . [This] forced those nations determined to defend their freedom to take measures in their own self-defense."

The difficulty in maintaining the thesis that immediate unambiguous and "remorseless" expansion by the Soviet Union, even prior to the armistice, was solely responsible for what fol-

lowed, is that it fails to account for certain key facts, and that it depends on certain assumptions which are untenable. The thesis fails to explain, for example, the fact that it took the Russians four years (from 1945 to 1949) to effect a remorseless expansion *behind their own military lines.*

Similarly, the thesis overlooks the contrast between Russian conduct in Hungary, where a free election was allowed to take place in 1945, and in Bulgaria and Rumania, where the Red Army installed Communist régimes almost at once. In point of fact, Soviet machinations in these latter two countries were carried out under the terms of an agreement between Churchill and Stalin, made in October 1944.[1] While Stalin was given what amounted to a free hand in Bulgaria and Rumania by the accord, Churchill was given a free hand in Greece, which he used to forcibly suppress the anti-Fascist resistance movement and to establish his own preferred regime, a rightist monarchy. The fact that Stalin kept his side of the agreement is of key significance, since Churchill could in no event have affected matters in Bulgaria or Rumania, whereas Stalin's refusal to provide aid to the Greek Communist and leftist forces in their battle with the British, was of critical, even decisive importance.

In addition to their inability to deal with these intractable events, orthodox theses about the cold war's origins generally rest on another shaky assumption, namely, the unilateral demobilization of the U.S. military machine. In theory, this demobilization resulted in a vacuum, which the Soviets could not have failed to exploit.[2]

> Our commitment, then as now, was to the world of the Charter. . . . In the service of this commitment . . . we dismantled the mightiest military force we had ever assembled. Armies were disbanded wholesale. . . . Within two years after the end of the war, our defense spending had fallen by nearly $70 billion. Our armed forces were slashed. . . . History has not seen, I believe, a more complete and comprehensive demonstration of a great nation's hope for peace and amity. (Stevenson.)

[1] Cf. discussion of this agreement p. 66 below.

[2] This thesis is advanced by W. W. Rostow in *The US in the World Arena,* 1960.

The difficulty in accepting this version of events comes from two sources. In the first place, America's demobilization was not unique, but was paralleled by the demobilization of the Soviet armies:

> Contrary to what is often believed in the West, the USSR made a very big reduction of the armed forces after the war, in fact, reducing them to 25 per cent of the 1945 figure, compared with the US reduction to 13 per cent.
>
> Considering that the USSR had long and potentially hostile frontiers, in Europe, the Middle and the Far East, whereas the USA had atomic bombs and no potentially hostile frontiers bordering the USA itself, the 1948 total Soviet manpower figures of 2.9 million would hardly seem excessive from a purely military standpoint, when compared with the American 1.5 million.[3]

In the second place, U.S. military capability is not adequately measured in terms of land forces, since the United States is primarily an air and sea power. The fact that during the first year of peace, the United States took steps to establish bases in the Pacific (by 1949 there were 400 U.S. bases around the perimeter of the Soviet Union), the fact that it tested the atomic bomb *before* the first control proposals were discussed and the fact that it continued its production of B-29s and planned production of B-36s all point to an intention different from that of unilateral disarmament.[4]

These observations suggest that there are many questions which orthodox attitudes towards the early post-war period leave unanswered, and that an examination of U.S. policy, particularly with regard to the dissolution of the wartime coalition is a prerequisite for understanding what happened later. With the above considerations in mind, we now turn to the task of examining the immediate post Yalta period and the actions which rapidly led to the outbreak of "cold war." . . .

Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. His last words on the question of relations with the Soviet Union, sent but an hour before

[3] P. M. S. Blackett, *Studies of War,* New York, 1962, p. 242, cf. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Red Army,* 1964, p. 189. Great Britain had at this time .75 million men under arms.

[4] Cf. the discussion of the Wallace memorandum p. 68 below.

his death to Winston Churchill, were measured and confident:

> I would minimize the general Soviet problem as much as possible because these problems, in one form or another, seem to arise every day, and most of them straighten out, as in the case of the Bern meeting.
>
> We must be firm, however, and our course thus far is correct.[5]

Since Roosevelt had been a prime mover of the wartime coalition and had guided it through its worst as well as its best days, his words carry a special weight and serve as a logical starting point for a study of its deterioration and eventual collapse. For within two weeks of this message, it became clear that the Russian policy of the new Administration was predicated on a very different set of assumptions. When President Truman made his debut in American-Soviet diplomacy in his famous first confrontation with Foreign Minister Molotov on April 23 at the White House, a striking new emphasis was apparent—one which seemed far removed from any attempt to "minimize the general Soviet problem."

When the Foreign Minister arrived at the White House, Truman "lost no time in making very plain to Molotov our displeasure at the Soviet failure to carry through the agreement made at Yalta about the character of a new Polish Government." Truman's "blunt language [was] unadorned by the polite verbiage of diplomacy."[6] Columnist Drew Pearson later wrote that Molotov had "heard Missouri mule-driver's language," and Charles Bohlen, a seasoned diplomat who served as interpreter for the meeting, reported that "he had never heard a top official get such a scolding."[7]

"I have never been talked to like that in my life," Molotov said at the end of the meeting.

"Carry out your agreements," Truman answered, "and you won't get talked to like that."[8]

Thus Harry Truman, "from the eminence of eleven days in power" had laid down the law to the Russians.[9]

[5] Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin*, 1957, p. 596.
[6] Leahy, *I Was There*, 1950, pp. 351–2.
[7] D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917–1950*, Vol. I, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Co., p. 270.
[8] Truman, *Memoirs*, I, p. 82.
[9] Fleming, *op. cit.*

The episode is all the more remarkable because Stalin had sent Molotov to the U.S. for the founding conference of the UN "to give some immediate assurance to the American people to indicate his desire to continue on a cooperative basis with this country" despite Roosevelt's death. Indeed, Stalin's reluctance to send Molotov had been overcome by the urgent pleading of W. A. Harriman, American Ambassador to the USSR, that this would be the most meaningful gesture to the American people.[10]

How this sudden shift in U.S. policy came about has been recorded, in its essentials, by President Truman's principal military and diplomatic advisors who participated in the White House conference which preceded the Truman-Molotov meeting. The conference began with Secretary of State Stettinius informing the group[11] that while discussions with Molotov had begun favorably, the Russians had now gone back on their agreement at Yalta with President Roosevelt on the Polish question; they continued to insist on a United Nations seat for the Lublin Government which they had recognized as the government of Poland. "In his [Stettinius'] view this was directly contrary to the Yalta understanding that Russia would join Great Britain and the United States in sponsoring and encouraging an entirely free and democratic election in Poland. He said that completely reliable State Department information was to the effect that the Lublin Government *did not in any way represent the Polish people*—that any free election would be certain to compel inclusion in the government of people like Premier Mikolajczyk and others of the Polish Government in exile.[12] [Emphasis in original.]

The central question, thus, was the approach to be taken with Molotov on the Polish question. At the heart of the issue was whether the Russians were clearly and deliberately breaking the Yalta Agreement. The Russians, it will be remembered, had actual military control in Poland. They had agreed to the formation of the government of liberated Poland under certain guiding principles. If the Russians kept these agreements, it would be a strong sign of good faith on their part because, in the absence of

[10] Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 1948, p. 883.

[11] Others present were Secretary of War Stimson, Navy Secretary Forrestal, Admiral King, General Marshall, Fleet Admiral Leahy, Major-General John R. Deane, Assistant Secretary of State James Dunn, Ambassador to Russia Harriman and Charles Bohlen.

[12] *The Forrestal Diaries*, ed. by Walter Millis, 1951, pp. 48–51.

Western power in the area, the West had no means of compelling them to do so. If the Russians sought to circumvent the agreements, a strong Western objection would serve the interests of future as well as present cooperation.

On the other hand, if the Russians were keeping the agreements *as they understood them*, and the West went out of its way to accuse the Soviets of bad faith, this would have a severely divisive effect on relations between the two countries. It would be tantamount to an attempt by one of the parties to impose its will on the other. As Molotov actually put it to Truman when they met and the charge of bad faith was made: "The three governments [at Yalta] had dealt as equal parties, and there had been no case where one or two of the three had attempted to impose their will on another and . . . as a basis of cooperation this was the only one acceptable to the Soviet Government."[13]

At the White House briefing, it was Secretary of War Stimson who asked how the Russians actually understood the agreement. Stimson had been a cabinet member in four administrations since 1911, either as Secretary of War, or as Secretary of State, and was beyond doubt the most experienced statesman in the room. Pointing out that the Russian conception of freedom, democracy and independent voting was quite different from the American or British, Stimson said, "he hoped we would go slowly and avoid any open break. He said that the Russians had carried out their military engagements quite faithfully and was sorry to see this one incident project a breach between the two countries." Stimson also said, "he thought that the Russians perhaps were being more realistic than we were in regard to their own security."[14]

The question of security had, of course, been paramount for the Russians as they did not hesitate to make known. "Twice in the last thirty years our enemies, the Germans, have passed through this corridor," Stalin had said at Yalta. "It is in Russia's interest that Poland should be strong and powerful, in a position to shut the door of this corridor by her own force."[15] The Rus-

[13] Truman, *Memoirs*, I, p. 81. This is Truman's recollection of Molotov's statement.

[14] Forrestal, *ibid.* The quotes are from Bohlen's notes.

[15] James F. Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, New York, 1947, pp. 31–2.

sians, therefore, had stipulated that the new Polish Government must be "friendly" to the Soviet Union.[16]

Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, was also asked his views at the White House conference. One of Truman's main advisors after the death of Roosevelt, Leahy subsequently became known as "one of the principal architects of the 'tough policy' toward Russia."[17] Yet, Leahy "thought the agreements were susceptible to two interpretations" and expressed hope that "the matter [at hand] could be put to the Russians in such a way as not to close the door to accommodation."[18] This outlook was consistent with Leahy's original reaction to the agreement when it was signed at Yalta. Then, he had complained to the President that it was "so elastic that the Russians can stretch it all the way from Yalta to Washington without ever technically breaking it." "I know, Bill—I know it," was Roosevelt's reply.[19]

But this was indeed the crucial point. If the Russians were not technically breaking the agreement, if there was a strong possibility that they were acting in good faith (i.e. towards the coalition, not necessarily towards the Poles), then too tough a line would not only be futile (since the power in the area was theirs) but dangerous as well. It is not surprising, therefore, that the third of the most distinguished advisors present, General George C. Marshall, was "even more cautious" than Leahy or Stimson, and "was inclined to agree that it would be a serious matter to risk a break."

Advocating the firm stand which was to be taken, were

[16] Of course one such stipulation could be stretched to empty the term "free elections" of all meaning. At best the agreement was, as it has been called, a compromise between the impossible and the inevitable. With regard to the question of security, however, it is important to remember that the 1939 Polish Government (from whom the London Poles stemmed) had been openly "unfriendly" to the Russians and had refused them permission to set their troops on Polish soil to repulse the expected Nazi invasion.

[17] Frank Gervasi, "Watchdog in the White House," *Colliers*, October 9, 1955.

[18] Forrestal, *op. cit.*

[19] Leahy, *op. cit.*, pp. 315–16; also, cf. C. Marzani, *We Can Be Friends* (Origins of the Cold War), 1952. While some of the theses of this book are untenable, it remains a provocative work and offers many useful insights on the subject of early post-war U.S.-Soviet relations to which the present account is considerably indebted.

Major General Deane, head of the Military Mission to Russia, Ambassador Harriman (whose dispatches in the weeks before the conference had consistently urged the necessity of taking a "tough" line with the Russians) and Navy Secretary Forrestal, who said "he had felt that for some time the Russians had considered that we would not object if they took over all of Eastern Europe into their power. He said it was his profound conviction that if the Russians were to be rigid in their attitude we had better have a showdown with them now, than later."

Truman minced no words in registering his feeling that "our agreements with the Soviet Union so far had been a one-way street and that he could not continue; it was now or never. He intended to go on with the plans for San Francisco and if the Russians did not wish to join us, they could go to hell."[20]

It was characteristic of the new President to formulate his opinions bluntly, and this very bluntness makes them easier to evaluate. In this case, the historical record provides no support for the estimate upon which Truman decided to face the Russians with the choice of joining him or going to hell. The record shows that the Yalta Agreements were not a one-way street, simply allied concessions to Soviet demands. In the words of Stettinius, who accompanied Roosevelt to Yalta, "the Soviet Union made more concessions to the United States and Great Britain than were made to the Soviet Union. . . ."[21] Moreover, all the agreements reached were, in a sense, Soviet concessions: "*As a result of the military situation, it was not a question of what Great Britain and the United States would permit Russia to do in Poland, but what the two countries could persuade the Soviet Union to accept. . . .*"[22] [Emphasis in original.]

This view was shared by Winston Churchill, certainly second to no statesman in his antipathy for the Soviet régime, whose postwar influence in East Europe he had feared and tried to frustrate by strategies throughout World War II. On February 27, 1945, two months before the White House conference, Churchill had reported to the House of Commons:

> The impression I brought back from the Crimea, and from all my other contacts, is that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders

[20] Forrestal, *op. cit.*
[21] Edward Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians*, 1949, p. 6.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 301.

wish to live in honorable friendship and equity with the Western democracies. I feel also that their word is their bond. I know of no government which stands to its obligations, even in its own despite, more solidly than the Russian Soviet Government. I decline absolutely to embark here on a discussion about Russian good faith. It is quite evident that these matters touch the whole future of the world. Sombre indeed would be the fortunes of mankind if some awful schism arose between the Western democracies and the Russian Soviet Union, if all the future world organizations were rent asunder, and if new cataclysms of inconceivable violence destroyed all that is left of the treasures and liberties of mankind.[23]

Against the cautionary views of the officials most experienced in American-Soviet relations, the decision at the White House conference was to talk "tough" to Molotov on the Polish issue. The same posture was also to be carried into the initial discussions within the newly created United Nations Organization at the founding meeting in San Francisco just getting underway. The lines of the "awful schism," which Churchill feared, were rapidly being drawn.

Truman's approach to the Soviet Foreign Minister was warmly supported by one of the most important members of the United States delegation to the San Francisco Conference, Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg. On January 10, 1945, Vandenberg had made an extraordinary speech to the Congress,[24] which catapulted him overnight from his position in the minority right wing of the Republican Party to that of spokesman and legislative leader for America's postwar bi-partisan foreign policy.

Vandenberg's reaction on being told of the Truman-Molotov interview was recorded in his diary:

Tuesday, April 24, 1945 (San Francisco)

Stettinius reached here from Washington this morning. . . .

. . . He immediately met our delegation and gave us a *thrilling* message. The new President [Truman] has declined to even wink

[23] Cited in Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[24] Most observers took the speech to be evidence of Vandenberg's conversion from isolationism. A more reflective view of D. F. Fleming characterizes it as "first and foremost, a demand for 'justice' for Poland." Vandenberg himself has said that it was inspired by his "deep conviction that it was time to anticipate what ultimately became the 'Moscow menace.' " Cf. *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*, 1953, p. 130. For a penetrating analysis of Vandenberg's outlook at this time, cf. Fleming, *op. cit.*, pp. 273, et. seq.

> at a surrender to Stalin on his demand for representation for the Lublin Poles. He has just sent a blunt message to Stalin including a general demand for Frisco cooperation. Stettinius said Eden could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw a copy—and cheered loudly. Stettinius added that he explained to Molotov that future Russian aid from America depends entirely upon the temper and mood and the conscience of the American people—and that Frisco is his last chance to *prove* that he deserves this aid. This is the best news in months. F.D.R.'s appeasement of Russia is over. . . . Stettinius does not know what the result will be. . . . But the crisis will come when Stalin's answer arrives. Russia may withdraw. If it does the conference *will proceed without Russia.* Now we are getting somewhere! [Emphasis is the Senator's.][25]

Thus Truman's delegate to the San Francisco Conference was not at all dismayed by the prospect that the Russians might withdraw from the United Nations altogether. Neither Vandenberg nor the President seemed to comprehend what lay behind Churchill's forebodings in his House of Commons' speech only two months earlier.

By this time, Vandenberg had already become a key figure in shaping United States foreign policy.[26] Further insight into his outlook is afforded by a diary entry of March 7, 1945. On that date, a month before the death of Roosevelt and a month and a half before the Molotov interview, Vandenberg had written:

> I could get no greater personal satisfaction out of anything more than from joining—aye, in leading—a public denunciation of Yalta. . . . But . . . I am forced from the circumstances to believe that we cannot get results by trying to totally combat decisions which are supported by our own American Administration and by the British Parliament. . . . We must find some other way. . . . I must primarily work . . . through the Frisco Conference and not in a public campaign of denunciation.[27]

Here, then, was Vandenberg formulating his purpose in going to San Francisco. And what was that purpose? To undo the Yalta

[25] Vandenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 175–6.

[26] It was Vandenberg who commanded the support of the isolationist opposition for all of the important Truman cold war legislation. His role in framing and passing the Marshall Plan was so important, that Marshall wanted it called the Marshall-Vandenberg Plan.

[27] Among other things, Vandenberg considered the Curzon Line "indefensible" as the eastern boundary for Poland. Vandenberg, *op. cit.*

decisions—that is, precisely the decisions which Truman six weeks later was to accuse the Russians of violating! And the news that Truman had given Molotov a drubbing for allegedly violating those decisions, Vandenberg found thrilling!

When Vandenberg reached San Francisco, he lost no time in trying to make provision for modifying the Yalta Agreement at some future time to accord more closely with his idea of justice. He proposed no less than eight amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks draft. Amendment No. 7 provided that if the Security Council finds situations involving injustice, "it shall recommend appropriate measures which may include revision of treaties and of prior international decisions. . . ."

Molotov accepted all the British and American amendments with a "friendly attitude" except this Vandenberg proposal. "He thought that such recommendations would give the Germans a chance to propagandize everlastingly for revision of the settlements in their favor, as they had done after World War I."[28]

Despite these underlying tensions, a cordial and cooperative atmosphere prevailed during much of the first United Nations session and considerable headway was made. The United States and the Soviet Union clashed seriously, however, when Washington ordered the United States delegation to push through the admission of Argentina.[29]

At Yalta, Roosevelt had promised Stalin twice that he would not support the admission of Argentina to the United Nations.[30] According to Cordell Hull, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Argentina had become "the refuge and headquarters in this hemisphere of the Fascist movement" and was obviously aiming at "Argentine hegemony of South America."[31]

When the question of Argentina's admission was brought up, Molotov quoted castigation of the Argentina régime by Roosevelt and Hull, and said:

> Up to now all invitations to this Conference have been approved unanimously by the four sponsoring governments which hold an

[28] Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

[29] Cf. Arthur Krock, the *New York Times*, November 21, 1946, cited in Fleming, p. 280.

[30] Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, 1948, p. 1408.

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 1405, 1419.

> equal position here. . . . The Soviet delegation suggests that the question of inviting Argentina to the conference be postponed for a few days for further study. This is the only request made by the Soviet delegation.

Secretary of State Stettinius spoke against this request and it was voted down 28–7, then 31–4 and afterwards Argentina was admitted.[32]

Hull was also a member of the United States delegation but was too ill to attend the meetings. From his sickroom, he telephoned Stettinius that "irreparable harm had been done" by the vote, and "if the American delegation were not careful we should get Russia into such a state of mind that she might decide that the United Nations organization was not going to furnish adequate security to her in the future."[33]

Hull's reaction was shared by other observers. The New York *Herald Tribune* found that the United States had "built a steamroller" in the United Nations and Walter Lippmann warned that we "had adopted a line of conduct which, if it becomes our regular line, will have the most disastrous consequences." In a later article Lippmann referred to this action as "riding roughshod through a world conference with a bloc of twenty votes" [the Latin American countries]; he regretted that the United States had lost "its central position as mediator" particularly since Anglo-Soviet difficulties extended in "a wide arc through the Balkans to the Middle East and Persia."[34]

It was plainly evident that, with the Latin American governments in tow, the United States could always muster an anti-Soviet majority. If she sought consistently to do so, the organization would lose its value as an agency of compromise and international cooperation and could very well turn into a public pillory of the Soviet Union. Soviet fears in this regard had their roots in Russia's having been the only nation expelled from the League of Nations (for her attack on Finland), and at the urging, it will be remembered, of Argentina. The League, of course, had

[32] Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

[33] Cordell Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1722.

[34] New York *Herald Tribune,* May 2 and 15, 1945, cited in Fleming, p. 281.

taken no similarly vigorous steps over the previous interventions by Fascist Italy and Germany in Ethiopia and Spain.

Against this background, Hull warned prophetically that if Russia could not find security in the United Nations, "she might decide that, while giving lip service to the organization and keeping up her membership and paying her dues, she ought at the same time to go back home and establish outposts, bases and warm water harbors in many areas and add buffer territory and otherwise prepare her own outward defenses just as fully as if the United Nations were not in existence."[35]

Despite the Argentine Issue, the San Francisco Conference succeeded in launching the United Nations. The conservative columnist, Arthur Krock, commented that Molotov could report to Stalin that Russia had conducted itself at the Conference "as a great power and a generally cooperative one on the task in hand." James Reston documented this appraisal in the *New York Times* of June 12: "The conference record shows, the delegates note, ten concessions by Russia which have contributed greatly to the liberalizing of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals."

Significantly, however, for the development of American popular thinking on the cold war, large portions of the United States press had printed quite another version of the conference. "The delegates here are conscious of reports that the Soviet Union has come here and demanded what they wanted and got what they demanded," Reston added, "and there is a general feeling that these reports do not give an accurate impression of what has happened."[36] . . .

The inability of the wartime allies to reach agreement on the veto question or the seating of the Lublin Poles, had cast something of a pall over the San Francisco Conference. As the chief delegates headed home, it appeared quite possible that the Conference itself might be "going on the rocks."

> Harriman and Bohlen were on an airplane flying eastward . . . with a sense of despair in their hearts. They asked each other whether there was any conceivable way of saving the situa-

[35] Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1722.

[36] *New York Times*, May 2, 1945 (Krock). Reston and Krock cited in Fleming, *op. cit.*, pp. 285–7.

> tion. . . . Bohlen suggested the possibility that President Truman might send Hopkins to Moscow. Harriman was enthusiastic about the suggestion. . . .[37]

There was an element of cynicism, unconscious perhaps, in the decision to send Harry Hopkins, already a "seriously ill" man, to parley with Stalin. Hopkins himself was surprised when Truman agreed to the suggestion that he undertake the mission, for Hopkins had been the key man in implementing Roosevelt's approach to the Soviet Union, an approach that had already fallen into disrepute.

Harriman took care to emphasize to Stalin, at the actual meeting, that Hopkins "had not only been very close to President Roosevelt but personally was one of the leading proponents of the policy of cooperation with the Soviet Union."[38] At that moment, of course, Harriman was himself one of the chief advocates of the view that it was impossible to continue along the present lines of cooperation with the Soviets, and that the Roosevelt-Hopkins approach would have to be modified until "our entire attitude toward them became characterized by much greater firmness."[39]

In gauging the difference between the approaches advocated by Harriman and Hopkins, no incident is more instructive than the famous stoppage of Lend-Lease Aid on May 8, 1945, just three weeks before Hopkins' talks with Stalin. The stoppage of aid (not only to the Russians, but to all the Allies) was so abrupt that ships were even turned around and brought back to port for unloading.[40]

At the Moscow meeting with Hopkins, Stalin did not question the *right* of the United States to curtail Lend-Lease shipments, but stressed his feeling that an agreement between the two governments had been ended "in a scornful and abrupt manner. He said that if proper warning had been given to the Soviet Government, there would have been no feeling of the kind he

[37] Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins,* p. 885.
[38] *Ibid.,* p. 892.
[39] Forrestal, *op. cit.,* pp. 39–41.
[40] Truman later claimed that he had not read the order and that if he had, he would not have signed it. *Memoirs,* I, pp. 221–2.

had spoken of; that this warning was important to them since their economy was based on plans."[41]

Hopkins' answer to Stalin is crucial to an understanding of the profound change that was taking place in American foreign policy as Roosevelt, Hopkins, and Hull departed from the scene:

> Mr. Hopkins replied that what disturbed him most about the Marshal's statement was the revelation that he believed that the United States would use Lend-Lease as a means of showing our displeasure with the Soviet Union. He wished to assure the Marshal that however unfortunate an impression this question had caused in the mind of the Soviet Government he must believe that there was no attempt or desire on the part of the United States to use it as a pressure weapon. *He said the United States is a strong power and does not go in for those methods.*[42] [Emphasis added.]

One can only wonder what Ambassador Harriman thought as he listened to this plea and to Stalin's reply that "he believed Mr. Hopkins and was fully satisfied with his statement in regard to Lend-Lease." For Harriman had been the most persistent spokesman for the position that precisely this kind of pressure tactic *must* be used against the Soviet Union in order to compel the Russians to cooperate. He had, in fact, called for the selection of "one or two cases" where Soviet actions had been "intolerable" and urged "effective reprisals" in order to make the Soviets realize that they "cannot continue their present attitude except at great cost to themselves."[43]

Now the Russo-American wartime alliance was not an exceptionally smooth one, and had been characterized by moments when one side thought the other's actions "intolerable" before. Nevertheless, Roosevelt and Hopkins had been able to maintain the working partnership on the basis of trust and mutual advantage, ironing out differences when they arose. In gauging Harriman's judgement of what he must have considered a series

[41] Sherwood, *op. cit.*

[42] *Ibid.*

[43] "On April 4, Harriman was cabling that 'we now have ample proof that the Soviet Government views *all* matters from the standpoint of their own selfish interests. . . .' On April 6, Harriman was cabling again, in general advocating a 'tough' policy with Russia as the one possible way of maintaining a soundly friendly relationship with her. . . ."—Forrestal, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–41, 47, 49, 57. Cf. Marzani, *op. cit.*

of new incidents, that is *new in kind,* so that they required a radical revision[44] of policy, it is instructive to consider an important concrete case.

Harriman was at the White House conference on April 23rd at which it was decided that the Russians should be firmly faced with their failure to live up to their commitments on the Polish question. He was not only the Ambassador to Russia at the time, but had been at Teheran and Yalta as well, and this increased the weight that his judgement carried. According to Truman's account, Harriman conceded Stimson's point that Russia had kept its "big" agreements on military matters. But he sought to controvert Stimson's conclusion (viz. that the Russians were still reliable partners, deserving, as equals, the benefit of the doubt) by observing that the "big" agreements

> were decisions the USSR had already reached by itself, *but on other military matters it was impossible to say that they had lived up to their commitments. For example, over a year ago they had agreed to start on preparations for collaboration in the Far Eastern war, but none of these had been carried out.*[45] [Emphasis added.]

Even a person unfamiliar with the facts about the Far Eastern War would have cause for surprise that Harriman should use Russia's delay in preparing its entry as the ground on which to base his general conclusion, that they were only reliable partners in decisions which they had already arrived at themselves (which is to say that they were never really "partners" at all). For a parallel case, with the roles of the United States and the USSR reversed, had already occurred.

On July 8, 1941, Litvinov had raised the demand for a second front. On May 29, 1942, Molotov came to Washington and was "assured" that the United States was preparing for a second front and expected to open it in 1942.[46] The opening of the sec-

[44] Since the United States was incomparably stronger than the USSR, a policy of "effective reprisals" against the Russians and *quid pro quo* dealings with them involved treating them no longer as equals, that is, no longer as members of the wartime alliance. It also signified that the United States no longer considered Russia a basically friendly power.

[45] Truman, *Memoirs,* I, p. 79.

[46] Fleming, *op. cit.,* pp. 149–50.

ond front* was a far more critical matter to the Russians in the year before the victory at Stalingrad, than the entry of Russian forces into the Japanese War in 1945 was to the United States (although the American leadership was deeply concerned to secure Russia's participation). Yet, the second front was not opened until June 6, 1944, or more than a year and a half later than it was promised, and after the Russians at great cost had achieved their main objectives of repulsing Hitler's invasion and removing the threat of their own defeat.

Despite this history, Harriman was willing to cite the apparent Soviet posture on the Far Eastern War as conclusive evidence that on military questions which did not directly concern their self-interest "it was impossible to say that they had lived up to their commitments" and thus to infer that on matters of the peace they would also prove unreliable. It was not only Harriman's historical view that was shortsighted, however: events subsequent to the April White House conference served, dramatically, to expose the emptiness of his estimate as well.

The Soviet commitment to enter the Pacific War had been made in formal terms at Yalta (hence its significance for the White House conference). Stalin had first estimated that it would require six months to move his armies from Germany to Manchuria. "At Yalta, after reflection, he shortened that period to three months and made it a pledge.[47] Germany was defeated on May 8, 1945 (two weeks after the White House conference). On August 8, three months to the day, as pledged, the Russians declared war on Japan.[48]

Thus, precisely that portion of the Yalta Agreement which Harriman seized upon as evidence that the Russians were not keeping their commitments was fulfilled by them *to the letter.* Yet, as Ambassador to Russia, Harriman was the principal White House advisor in estimating Russian intentions. During the weeks directly prior to the April conference, in a series of cables (which the influential Forrestal incorporated verbatim into his diary)

*[The "second front" referred to the anticipated allied invasion of Western Europe.—Ed.]

[47] Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 196; Snell, *The Meaning of Yalta*, 1956, p. 35.

[48] Fleming, p. 302.

Harriman asserted without qualification that "our experience has incontrovertibly proved that it is not possible to bank general goodwill in Moscow" and that in future dealings with the Russians we must act "always on a *quid pro quo* basis."[49]

[The author describes Hopkins' encounter with Stalin and the two concessions made by the latter, (1) to allow Western-oriented Poles into a coalition Warsaw government and (2) to withdraw the Soviet demand that the veto power be extended to include discussions of any complaints directed against a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.—Ed.]

The news arrived in San Francisco the next day, June 7, and that night, without having received any specific report on the actual contents of the Hopkins-Stalin exchange, Vandenberg wrote in his diary,

> *America wins!* The "Veto" crisis broke today—and it broke *our* way. . . . It is a complete and total surrender. No attempt at any weasel-worded compromise. Just a straight-out acceptance of unhindered hearing and discussion. . . . [Emphasis in original.]
>
> *I think everyone is convinced that the blunt, unconditional message which Stettinius sent to Moscow turned the trick.* I hope some of our people have learned a lesson. Many of them were beginning to weaken under the "war of nerves."[50] [Emphasis added.]

Thus, even Russian concessions served to confirm the proponents of the tough line in their new approach. Harriman went so far as to interpret the productive Stalin-Hopkins talks as further evidence of the Soviets' new uncooperative line. In the words of President Truman:

> The Russian dictator, Harriman later reported, showed that he did not fully understand the basis of the difficulties. He *took the offensive* in complaining "about our misdeeds" and *aggressively* indicated that if we did not wish to deal on a friendly basis with the Soviet Union, she was strong enough to look after herself.[51] [Emphasis added.]

In the public record of the Stalin-Hopkins talks, the only remark

[49] Forrestal, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–41.
[50] Vandenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 208.
[51] Truman, *Memoirs*, I, pp. 262–3.

by Stalin which can be bent into this mold was that already quoted in regard to Lend-Lease Aid. There, in what was quite clearly an attempt to help Hopkins out of an embarrassing position, the dictator recognized the right of the United States to stop aid if it wished to, and suggested that the Russians would not have been so hurt by the stoppage if they had been warned in advance.

It would have been most surprising if Stalin had, in fact, "aggressively" indicated that the Russians were ready to go-it-alone, if necessary. The United States was the one major power with a totally intact industrial plant. The Russians made no secret of the enormous losses they had suffered in the war.[52] If either of the two parties would have been unadversely affected, from a purely national standpoint, by going-it-alone, then it was the United States. And indeed, the only remarks in the talks which did resemble the formula recalled by Harriman were those in which Stalin expressed his fears that United States leaders were, in effect, saying that if the Soviets did not wish to go along with United States plans, they could go to hell.

Hopkins himself had a more perceptive and, unfortunately, a more prophetic comment to make on these and related events, that is, on the change that had taken place in the United States approach to the Soviet Union. Shortly before his death, some six months after the Moscow talks, he warned: *"Our Russian policy must not be dictated by people who have already made up their minds there is no possibility of working with the Russians and*

[52] According to an official statement of the Extraordinary State Committee (USSR), between 15 and 20 million Soviet citizens had been killed. The Germans had destroyed completely or partially 15 large cities, 1,710 towns and 70,000 villages. They burned or demolished 6 million buildings and deprived 25 million people of shelter. They demolished 31,850 industrial enterprises, 65,000 kilometers of railway track, 4,100 railway stations, 36,000 postal, telegraph and telephone offices, 56,000 miles of main highway, 90,000 bridges and 10,000 power stations. They ruined 1,135 coal-mines and 3,000 oil wells, carried off to Germany 14,000 steam boilers, 1,400 turbines and 11,300 electric generators. They sacked 98,000 collective farms and 2,890 machine and tractor stations and slaughtered or carried off 7 million horses, 17 million cattle, 20 million hogs, 27 million sheep and goats, 110 million poultry. They looted and destroyed 40,000 hospitals and medical centres, 84,000 schools and colleges and 43,000 public libraries with 110 million volumes. They destroyed 44,000 theatres, 427 museums and 2,800 churches. Cited in Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 923.

that our interests are bound to conflict and ultimately lead to war. From my point of view, this is an untenable position and can but lead to disaster."[53]

After the Stalin-Hopkins talks, preparations were made for the final wartime meeting of the "Big Three" to discuss, among other things, the occupation of Germany. It was the first, and last, face-to-face encounter between Stalin and Truman.

In the period before the talks, Truman made a series of changes in his cabinet. Of ten members of the Roosevelt cabinet, six either resigned or were replaced between June 30 and the opening of the Potsdam Conference on July 18.[54] . . .

Truman's final cabinet change was his appointment of James F. Byrnes, a South Carolina Dixiecrat, to the post of Secretary of State, replacing Stettinius. "I felt it my duty," Truman wrote afterwards, "to choose without too much delay a Secretary of State with proper qualifications to succeed, if necessary to the presidency. At this time, I regarded Byrnes as the man best qualified.[55]

As the Potsdam Conference got under way, Truman promptly put forward two proposals which had been drawn up by the American delegations. The first was to establish the Council of Foreign Ministers, and this was accepted with such speed that the Americans were put into a state of high hopes as they "went to lunch."[56] The second American proposal is perhaps best described by Byrnes himself: "Our paper states flatly that the obligations assumed in the Yalta Declaration had not been carried out," and proposed "joint action in reorganizing the governments of Bulgaria and Rumania to permit participation of all democratic groups."

The Russian response to this paper, delivered by Molotov,

[53] Sherwood, *op. cit.*, p. 923.

[54] Of the remaining four, two had left by the end of 1945 and the last two by the end of 1946. "Of the 125 most important government appointments made by President Truman in the first two postwar years," wrote Howard K. Smith, "49 were bankers, financiers, and industrialists, 31 were military men, and 17 lawyers, mostly with Big Business connections. The effective locus of government seemed to shift from Washington to some place equidistant between Wall Street and West Point."—Howard K. Smith, *The State of Europe,* 1949, p. 83, cf. also p. 95.

[55] Truman, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[56] Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly,* 1947, p. 21.

was an attack on British intervention in Greece. The British denied the Soviet assertions and claimed that there had been free elections. Molotov countered with British and American press reports that "there were greater excesses in Greece than in either Rumania or Bulgaria."[57]

Thus began the process of claim and counter-claim, charge and counter-charge which characterized so much of the relations between the former allies in the ensuing period. While a number of accords were reached at Potsdam, including the establishment of a Council of Foreign Ministers and a formula for the occupation of Germany, these were overshadowed by the changed spirit within the coalition. Sumner Welles, Roosevelt's Under-Secretary of State, went so far as to pin-point the source of the change. With the death of Roosevelt, he wrote, "the direction of American policy passed into other hands. The dire change this brought about in Soviet-American relations was apparent to every objective observer present at the meeting at Potsdam.[58]

But Potsdam as a symbol of the deterioration of Soviet-American relations was soon eclipsed by events at the other end of the globe: the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

On August 9, the day the second Atomic Bomb was dropped on Japan, President Truman explained that these bombs were used "to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans." The justification for his statement seemed to lie in the fact Japan would not surrender. It had cost 70,000 lives to take Iwo Jima and Okinawa the previous spring. Any invasion of the home islands would cost hundreds of thousands of lives.

But no land invasion of these islands had been planned to take place before November 1, 1945![59] The United States knew, moreover, that the Japanese Government was suing for peace, through its Moscow Ambassador, a month before the bomb was

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

[58] Sumner Welles, *Where Are We Heading?* 1946, pp. 375–9. Not surprisingly the Potsdam accords were short-lived. Nor was it only the Russians who failed to honor them: "Potsdam today is to a large extent a dead letter in the Western Zones of Germany."—Barbara Ward, *The West at Bay*, 1948, p. 28.

[59] See Secretary of War Stimson's article in *Harper's*, February 1947, also in Stimson and Bundy *On Active Service*, 1947, p. 365.

actually dropped.[60] Even earlier, on May 28, Harry Hopkins had cabled to Truman:

> By August 8 the Soviet Army will be properly deployed on the Manchurian positions [i.e. for entry into the war]. . . .
>
> Japan is doomed and the Japanese know it.
>
> Peace feelers are being put out by certain elements in Japan and *we should therefore consider together our joint attitude* [i.e. Soviet and American] *and act in concert about the surrender of Japan.* Stalin expressed the fear that the Japanese will try to split the allies.[61] [Emphasis added.]

Hopkins' advice to act in concert about the surrender of Japan, as would be normal for allies, went unheeded. Stalin's fear that the Allies would be split proved correct, though it was not a Japanese initiative that served as cause.

According to Hopkins' cable, Stalin had a proposal for dealing with the Japanese. He thought it was necessary to achieve the effects of unconditional surrender, namely, elimination of the emperor and the warlords, so that they could not start a war of revenge. He did not think, however, that the Japanese would submit to unconditional surrender. Therefore, if the Japanese sought surrender on modified terms, he thought the Allies should accept these modified terms and then impose their will through the occupying forces. Truman, however, was not interested in Stalin's proposal.

On July 26, just thirteen days before the Russians were scheduled to enter the war and three months before any invasions jeopardizing American lives were planned, Great Britain, China and the United States issued an ultimatum to the Japanese call-

[60] Cf. *Forrestal Diaries* entry dated July 13: "The first real evidence of a Japanese desire to get out of the war came today through intercepted messages from Togo . . . to Sato, Jap Ambassador to Moscow, instructing the latter to see Molotov if possible before his departure for the Big Three meeting . . . to lay before him the Emperor's strong desire to secure a termination of the war. . . . Togo said further that the unconditional surrender terms of the Allies was about the only thing in the way of termination. . . ." According to US Strategic Bombing Survey No. 4, "certainly prior to December 31, 1945, Japan would have surrendered, even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."

[61] Sherwood, *op. cit.*

ing on them to surrender unconditionally or face "prompt and utter destruction." No hint was offered that a new and previously inconceivable weapon was to be used against them.

"The declaration was immediately released for publication," writes Byrnes, "and a copy was sent by special messenger to Mr. Molotov." Molotov phoned later in the evening and asked that the declaration "be held up two or three days." When he was told it already had been released, he seemed disturbed. The next day, Byrnes explained to Molotov that the Soviet Union had not been informed of the ultimatum to the Japanese to surrender, because "we did not want to embarrass the Soviet Union by presenting it with a declaration affecting a country with which it was not yet at war." (The fact that the United States had concluded an agreement with the Russians at Yalta to enter the war, and that the Russians had indicated they would do so thirteen days hence, apparently made no difference.) Molotov replied "simply" that the Allies "should have consulted him."[62]

On July 29, Molotov called again and said that Stalin had instructed him to discuss (with Truman and Byrnes) "the immediate cause of the Soviet Union's entry into the war." "The request," wrote Byrnes later, "presented a problem to us." "The Soviet Union," Byrnes explained, "had a nonaggression pact with the Japanese. . . . We did not believe that the United States Government should be placed in the position of asking another government to violate its agreement without good and sufficient reason. . . . The President was disturbed."[63]

This intense concern for the niceties of international law seems scarcely credible in view of the Administration's willingness to atomize the 400,000 civilian inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at a moment when their government was suing for peace. A more palpable explanation of the dismay felt by Truman and Byrnes was candidly expressed by the latter when he wrote, "As for myself, I must frankly admit that in view of what we knew of Soviet actions in Eastern Germany and the violations of

[62] Byrnes, *op. cit.*, p. 207. Stalin, it should be noted, had informed Truman of the Japanese attempts to get the Russians to intervene in their behalf and help mediate a peace.

[63] Byrnes, pp. 207–8.

the Yalta agreements in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria, I would have been satisfied had the Russians determined not to enter the war."[64]

This admission is borne out by the historical record. On July 28, the day before Molotov's phone call, Forrestal noted in his diary a conversation with Byrnes: "Byrnes said he was *most anxious* to get the Japanese affair over with before the Russians get in, with particular reference to Dairen and Port Arthur. Once in there, he felt, it would not be easy to get them out. . . ." [Emphasis added.] Looking backward this may well seem like the realistic and prescient view of a hard-headed statesman seeking to thwart the designs of Russian imperialism. Of no small consequence, in making such an assessment, however, is the fact that Russia had been *guaranteed rights* to be in Dairen and Port Arthur, by mutual agreement at Yalta. Dairen was to be internationalized as a commercial port (the Russians being guaranteed access) and Port Arthur was to be leased to the Russians as a naval base. Actually this did not even amount to a restoration of the rights Russia had already had in these ports, and had lost in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.[65]

Thus, instead of wishing to keep Russia out of the Japanese War because the Russians had violated the Yalta Agreements, Byrnes wanted to keep them out so the United States might ignore the agreements—or at least circumvent them.

In retrospect, the desire to keep the Russians out would seem to have been the primary reason for the use of the Atomic Bombs.[66] Only this can explain the haste with which they were dropped (without waiting to see the effect of Russian entry on the war) and the lack of any reasonable time space or a second ultimatum between them. Indeed, the second bomb was dropped on August 9, the day that Russian troops entered Manchuria. On August 10, the Japanese offered to surrender on modified, not unconditional terms. After a reply by the Allies on August 11, they did so on August 14.

On August 18, in the perceptible wake of the Atomic Bomb,

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

[65] Snell, *The Meaning of Yalta*, pp. 129, et seq.

[66] This is Blackett's conclusion in *Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Weapons.*

Byrnes publicly charged that the Bulgarian elections were not being conducted democratically. As a result, the elections were postponed. Byrnes' statement, according to one historian of Russian affairs, marked the beginning of "the tragic impasse in Soviet-American relations."[67]

The significance of Byrnes' attack lies in the fact that while the Russians were definitely breaking the Yalta Agreements by rigging the elections in Bulgaria, they were doing so under the terms of an agreement with the West that had already cost them a great deal, politically, to maintain. This was the already mentioned secret Churchill-Stalin agreement on the Balkans made in Moscow in October 1944. According to Churchill's own account, he proposed a "ninety per cent predominance in Rumania" for Russia, the same for Britain in Greece, and 50–50 in Yugoslavia. Then he added a proposed split in the five Balkan countries, Hungary 50–50, Bulgaria 75 per cent control for Russia and 25 per cent to the others.[68]

On March 8, 1945, Churchill cabled Roosevelt (who disapproved of the agreement) that "Stalin adhered very strictly to this understanding."[69] What Churchill meant was that Stalin had stood by while the British forces broke the back of the Greek anti-fascist (but also anti-monarchist and Communist-dominated) resistance movement, EAM-ELAS, and restored the rightist monarchy in Greece. For his patience, Stalin was allowed to install his own favored element in the axis satellites, Rumania and Bulgaria. In Hungary, by way of contrast, Stalin allowed a free election in autumn 1945,[70] which he lost. In Yugoslavia, he actually tried to induce Tito to bring King Peter back and restore the Monarchy.[71]

Byrnes' protest on the handling of the Bulgarian elections thus could only be seen by the Russians as an attempt to convict them in the eyes of world opinion of having broken their solemn publicly made agreements. They could counter with statements about Greece, but any international debate with the West, on the

[67] Frederick L. Schuman, "The Devil and Jimmy Byrnes," *Soviet Russia Today,* 1948, p. 7.

[68] Churchill, *The Second World War,* Vol. VI, 1953, pp. 227–8.

[69] Byrnes, *op. cit.,* p. 53.

[70] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution,* 1950, p. 193.

[71] The Alsops, June 24, July 23, 1951, cited in Fleming, p. 199.

subject of free elections, was one that they were eventually bound to lose. The deeper significance of Byrnes' statement was that it indicated to the Russians that the West was no longer interested in working with them, and was even ready to use overt pressure against them. This was the effective end of the coalition. . . .

By July [1946], the American build-up was such that Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace could write in a private memorandum to the President:

> How do American actions since V-J Day appear to other nations? I mean by actions the concrete things like $13 billion for the War and Navy Departments, the Bikini tests of the atomic bomb and continued production of bombs, the plan to arm Latin America with our weapons, production of B-29's and planned production of B-36's and the effort to secure air bases spread over half the globe from which the other half of the globe can be bombed. I cannot but feel that these actions must make it look to the rest of the world as if we were only paying lip service to peace at the conference table.
>
> These facts rather make it appear either (1) that we are preparing ourselves to win the war which we regard as inevitable or (2) that we are trying to build up a predominance of force to intimidate the rest of mankind. How would it look to us if Russia had the atomic bomb and we did not, if Russia had 10,000 mile bombers and air bases within 1,000 miles of our coastlines, and we did not? . . .[72]

When Wallace raised these questions publicly, the following September, Truman asked for his resignation. Later Truman wrote that while Wallace had urged that American foreign policy be modified in order to allay any reasonable Russian grounds for fear or suspicion, Wallace "had no specific proposals how this might be accomplished without surrendering to them on every count."[73]

But in a memorandum to the President, four months previously, Wallace had made a specific proposal that did not seem to involve surrender. First, Wallace noted a primary source of the difficulties experienced with the Soviets. "We know," he wrote,

[72] Submitted July 23, 1946; cited in Fleming, pp. 420–21.
[73] Truman, *op. cit.*

"that much of recent Soviet behavior which has caused us concern has been the result of their dire economic needs and of their disturbed sense of security. The events of the past few months have thrown the Soviets back to their pre-1939 fears of 'capitalist encirclement' and to their erroneous belief that the Western World, including the USA, is invariably and unanimously hostile." In light of this situation, Wallace proposed the following:

> *I think we can disabuse the Soviet mind and strengthen the faith of the Soviets in our sincere devotion to the cause of peace by proving to them that we want to trade with them and to cement our economic relations with them.* To do this, it is necessary to talk with them in an understanding way, with full realization of their difficulties and yet with emphasis on the lack of realism in many of their assumptions and conclusions which stand in the way of peaceful world co-operation.[74] [Emphasis added.]

Truman's reaction to the initiative is best expressed in his own words: "I ignored this letter of Wallace's.[75]

"I had expressed my policy to Bedell Smith [new Ambassador to Russia]," continued Truman, "and had suggested the approach he should take to the Kremlin." Truman's approach, of course, had been outlined by him in the memorandum to Byrnes two months earlier ("Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language—another war is in the making. . . . I do not think we should play compromise any longer.") Though this policy had been more or less in practice since April 23, 1945, and consistently so since August 18, it had only been presented to the public nine days prior to the Wallace memorandum, that is, on March 5, 1946, at Fulton, Missouri. There Truman listened while Winston Churchill intoned his famous words ("From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent,") and called for an alliance of English-speaking peoples who, with their combined resources and their naval and airforce bases "all over the world," could provide "an overwhelming assurance of security" to the peoples on their side of the curtain. Russian actions since the war had so little prepared the public for this view that there was an uproar against it on both

[74] *Ibid.*
[75] *Ibid.*

sides of the Atlantic. In America this reaction was so great, that Truman had to deny, falsely, that he had known the contents of Sir Winston's speech.[76] . . .

In the Fall of 1946, there had been some hopeful signs that the growing breach between East and West might still be healed. The peace treaties with the Nazi satellites (Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary and Rumania) had been agreed upon and signed, and for a few weeks the feeling of "peace" was really in the air. . . . "The sun of peace is rising at last," commented British Foreign Secretary Bevin in New York.[77]

Then, in the last days of January 1947, the worst snowstorm since 1894 descended on Britain and paralyzed her. Within four months, it was demonstrated to the world that where once the seat of mighty empire had stood, only a gaping power vacuum remained, so financially ruined as to be incapable of supporting army or navy,[78] the necessary instruments of her will. As a result, India, Burma, Palestine were cast loose from British rule (Palestine to United Nations administration); South Africa, Guatemala, Argentina, Iraq and Egypt challenged the shell of English power in one way or another without suffering reprisal.

This crisis led Britain to inform the United States on February 24, that she could no longer pay for her troops in Greece or continue aid to Turkey. On March 12, 1947, Truman went before Congress to announce the Truman Doctrine and to seek military and economic aid for the two countries, especially Greece where civil war was still raging. However, instead of proposing to assist in solving the genuine social and economic crisis of Greece, President Truman used the occasion of Britain's withdrawal to launch an ideological crusade against totalitarian régimes. Truman declared that every nation was faced with a choice between alternative ways of life.

> One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, . . . freedom of speech and religion and freedom from political repression.
>
> The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority

[76] Cf. Fleming, pp. 348–57.

[77] Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–18; Fleming, pp. 429–30.

[78] "For a short period at the end of 1947 it was down to a total active strength of one cruiser and four destroyers." Smith, p. 28.

forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression . . . and the suppression of personal freedoms. . . .

Taken in the abstract, the conflict of values expressed here is one of the most critical that political man has to face. In the context of the world of 1947, however, the statement was a vast oversimplification of very complex set of choices in a very complex world system. In the context of the specific situation in Greece,[79] the best that could be said of Truman's antithesis was that it was irrelevant. Greece under Tsaldaris was quite obviously a totalitarian régime, and United States economic and military aid was clearly aid to totalitarian forces.[80]

This widely noted gap between Truman's rhetoric and the concrete reality at hand was hardly surprising since the Doctrine had been in Truman's mind a long time before it was announced. As early as the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in September 1945, he had decided to proclaim the existence of a world division and the United States' determination to crusade against one of the two parties. "He made up his mind then that, when a fitting opportunity arose and one which Congress and the people would recognize as such, he would proclaim the new doctrine," wrote Arthur Krock, the informed Washington columnist of the *New York Times*.[81] "On several occasions he thought the time had come, but some of his important advisors talked him out of it." When the British informed the United States that they were withdrawing from Greece, a situation arrived which Truman found suited to his "long held purpose," and Clark Clifford was set to drafting "the global anti-Communist policy."[82]

Such was the genesis of perhaps the major document in America's cold war offensive: an ideology waiting for a set of facts (and as it happened, the wrong facts) to confirm it. Small wonder that the scholarly Kennan was distraught at this version of containment. . . .

[79] In Turkey as well, which was a dictatorship.

[80] The other key point in Truman's address, concern for the independence of Greece, can hardly be squared with the decision to grant the aid bilaterally, to by-pass the United Nations, see discussion below.

[81] *New York Times,* March 23, 1947, cited in Fleming.

[82] Cf. Fleming's long and important discussion of the Doctrine, pp. 433–76.

part two

The Interests of Imperialism

Certain conflicts between and within nations grow from misunderstandings arising from false images, irrationalities, and lack of communication. Antagonistic interests sometimes can be reconciled when disputes are approached in a spirit of compromise and empathy, and when the would-be antagonists strive for a clear understanding of conflicting perspectives. But the hope that better communication will resolve some of our domestic and international differences should not blind us to the fact that many conflicts arise not because of a lack of understanding but because the competing interests understand each other's position all too well. The existence of irrational imagery does not preclude the existence of rational, substantive interests in national and international struggles. An impoverished and exploited peasantry, rising in rebellion against a wealthy and repressive oligarchy, is not suffering from a lack of understanding of its enemies. More likely, through years of experience, the populace has developed a very keen appreciation of how ruling interests are maintained and how its own interests are oppressed. Similarly, the ruling classes in most nations have a fairly accurate notion of the threat posed to their privileges and power by movements that seek fundamental changes in the ownership and uses of wealth and property.

We can extend this argument to the role played by the United States in the world today: it may be that American interventionism in such places as Southeast Asia and Latin

America is not a folly, but a rational extension of a policy dedicated to the maintenance of American capitalist interests. Not misplaced zeal, but imperialism may be the reason for United States involvement in so many overseas wars. The conflicts that arise when American capital interests are challenged by social revolution, then, do not usually result from some failure in communication but from a conflict of real interests. American corporations have multi-billion-dollar interests in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. In Southeast Asia, American holdings in oil, minerals, and rubber are quite extensive, especially in such places as Indonesia and the Philippines.

The three selections in this section lend important documentation to support the view that a primary function of United States policy abroad is to service, subsidize, and forcibly protect American capitalist interests at the expense of native populations. With varying emphases, the authors trace the effects of American investments on the independence, material well-being, and socio-political life of underdeveloped nations. At stake, Carl Oglesby writes, is the control of "the real wealth and real labor of [overseas] people." The function of business policy is to maximize profit and not to develop backward lands. Government policies are fashioned with that corporate pecuniary objective in mind, as James Petras declares, by key officials who have direct links with the investing corporate interests. As America's global investments grow, Baran and Sweezy remind us, so does America's global militarism. The primary dedication of American foreign policy, they conclude, is to make the world safe for capitalism.

4

The Free World's Corporate Empire

Carl Oglesby

The American supercorporation is no longer defined mainly by its product. It combines in itself the basic functions that once distinguished finance and industry as separate spheres. It pulls together and coordinates the economic acts of capital accumulation and dispersion (banking), technological innovation ("inventors"), production (plant construction and management), distribution (middleman enterprise), and demand management (the free market). By persuasion and purchase, it has won the cooperation of the labor bureaucracies, whose corporate responsibility is to guarantee the stability of the nation's labor force. Between management and organized labor, there are no fundamentally divisive questions of values or aims; they are unequal members of the same corporate entity. With the active or passive support of labor and government, management coordinates centrally all operations in the source-to-user product stream, vertical integration being crucial for efficiency. Decision-making is scientific and centralized.

The supercorporation's immensity and power may be suggested by the following passage from *In Few Hands* (Penguin,

From Carl Oglesby and Richard Shaull, *Containment and Change*, New York, Macmillan Company, 1967, pp. 79–83, 101–111.

1965), Estes Kefauver's posthumously published record of his Senate committee's antitrust investigations:

> In 1962 the 20 largest manufacturing corporations alone had $73.8 billion in assets, or about one quarter of the total assets of the United States manufacturing companies. In turn, the 50 largest companies held 36 per cent; the 100 largest, 46 per cent; the 200 largest, 56 per cent; and the 1000 largest, nearly 75 per cent.

Geared in directly or indirectly with the major financial and industrial centers of Europe, these giants inspired Development and Resources Corporation Chairman David E. Lilienthal (TVA director for Roosevelt, AEC director for Truman) to coin the now standard term "multinational corporation."[1] With the equally globalized big banks with which they are interlocked, the multinational corporations are the chief sources of American overseas investment capital.

The value of direct U.S. investment abroad, less than $25 billion in 1955, was about $50 billion a decade later and increasing at a rate of about $10 million a day.[2] Total U.S. foreign investment, direct and portfolio,* was about $130 billion in 1965, of which more than 30 per cent was in oil.[3] Of the $50 billion total direct foreign investment, 60 per cent is invested in Canada and Europe; of the 40 per cent invested in the underdeveloped countries, half is in Latin America.[4]

The multinational corporation does not merely export its products and money; it transplants itself. In 1965 about 2000 American firms were doing business abroad, and of their net foreign sales of $110 billion, only one fifth of that amount came from sale of goods and products shipped from the United States. Extreme instances of transplant occur in the automobile industry. In 1965 General Motors built 20 per cent of its cars outside the United States, Chrysler 30 per cent, and Ford 40 per cent.[5]

[1] David E. Lilienthal, "The Multinational Corporation," paper delivered at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, April 1960.

[2] Richard J. Barber, "Big, Bigger, Biggest: American Business Goes Global," *New Republic,* April 30, 1966.

* Direct investments give the investor a voice, sometimes controlling, in the management of the enterprise. Portfolio investments usually do not.

[3] *Wall Street Journal,* February 8, 1966.

[4] Barber, *loc. cit.*

[5] *Ibid.*

Europe is apprehensive. The aggregate sales of Volkswagen, Fiat, Daimler-Benz, British Motors, and Renault are only two thirds of Ford's sales, only one third of GM's. U.S. firms control almost the entire electronics industry of France, produce 90 per cent of her synthetic rubber, distribute 65 per cent of her petroleum, and manufacture 65 per cent of her farm machinery.[6] Louis Armand has said, "Unless Europe reacts and gets organized, we are condemning ourselves to industrial colonization."[7] He is echoed by Gaston Defferre: "The economic invasion by the United States is a clear and present danger. American economic power, the dynamic power of its big businesses and the size of their investments in Europe . . . are the beginning of the colonization of our economy."[8] German officials of government and industry react by urging the merger of European firms, especially in steel and cars, both on a national and continental basis.

The direction of the growth of American corporate control abroad is no easier to predict than its inner process is to describe, but Richard J. Barber, special counsel for the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, offers an expert's guess:

> By functioning multinationally, American and other business corporations have effectively avoided the reach of the antitrust laws of any single country in which they produce or sell their wares. . . . Based on recent experience, 300 corporations will by 1975 control more than 75 per cent of all industrial assets.[9]

The overseas expansion of corporate America has the ardent support of the American government, if not of the French. The U.S. government cooperates in many different ways. For one, it operates the Agency for International Development, which *Forbes* calls "the principal agency through which the U.S. government finances business abroad. . . . AID distributes about $2 billion a year. Of this, 85 per cent is spent in the U.S. for Ameri-

[6] *Newsweek,* March 8, 1965.

[7] Barber.

[8] Quoted in Marshall Windmiller, "Viet-Nam and the Power Elite," *The Commentary of Marshall Windmiller,* TLD Press, Berkeley, Calif., March 31, 1966. The quotation is from Defferre's article in the April 1966 *Foreign Affairs.*

[9] Barber.

can products and raw materials."[10]* For another, the U.S. government helps capitalize and manage such Free World financial institutions as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), the International Finance Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Overseas Development Fund, and the International Development Association, all of which (but notably the World Bank and the Ex-Im Bank) exist to serve the international interest of the American-dominated multinational corporation either by the direct financing of certain ventures or, more importantly, by financing the development of that infrastructure—roads, railroads, docks, power plants—which private capital feels it cannot afford to build, cannot live without, and deserves to have.[13]

This expansionary corporation may or may not stimulate the growth of material prosperity and the advance of democratic values in the host countries; we shall look into that shortly. But there is no question that this expansion is highly profitable to the corporations themselves. Chase Manhattan Bank Chairman David Rockefeller insists that U.S. profits in Latin America are not usually great: "The United States investment in Latin America has fortunately been moderately successful [he puts it at about 13 per cent], but it can hardly be called 'exploitative.'"[14] This is not an

[10] *Forbes,* April 1, 1966.

* For a different but complementary view of AID, consider this statement by D. A. Fitzgerald, former deputy director of the United States International Cooperation Administration: "A lot of criticism of foreign aid is because the critic thought the objective was to get economic growth, and this wasn't the objective at all. . . . The objective may have been to buy a lease, or to get a favorable vote in the UN, or to keep a nation from falling apart, or to keep some country from giving the Russians airbase rights, or any one of many other reasons."[11] AID also uses the public money to ensure American companies' overseas operations. Toward the end of 1965, AID issued its biggest single policy, $179 million, to guarantee International Telephone & Telegraph's Chilean expansion against losses from inconvertible currency, expropriation, war, and revolution.[12]

[11] Seymour Melman, *Our Depleted Society,* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1965, p. 150.

[12] "What U.S. Companies Are Doing Abroad," *U.S. News & World Report,* January 24, 1966.

[13] For a good short review of these institutions and their shortcomings, see the memorandum "A Bank for Economic Acceleration of Backward Countries," by Morris Forgash, president of the United States Freight Company, published as Appendix D in Melman, pp. 342–352.

[14] David Rockefeller, "What Free Enterprise Means to Latin America," *Foreign Affairs,* April 1966.

entirely lame dissimulation. Figures can be produced to serve his point. It is not at all easy to determine the absolute profitability of our overseas operations. One reason for this is that a variety of concealing accounting techniques are available to the imperial clerk. For a simple and basic example, imagine a corporation in which the home-based production unit buys its materials from the foreign-based extractive unit. Corporate management may direct the latter to keep its prices low since low book profits will result in local tax advantages, and in any case will be recouped at the production end.

But it is still possible to get a good general sense of the immense cash value of our corporations' foreign adventures. "In industry after industry," said *Business Week* in 1963, "U.S. companies found that their overseas earnings were soaring, and that their return on investment abroad was frequently much higher than in the U.S. As earnings abroad began to rise, profit margins from domestic operations started to shrink. . . . This is the combination that forced development of the multinational company."[15] Department of Commerce figures show that in the period 1950–61 there was a direct American foreign investment outflow of $13.7 billion. In the same period, returned income was $23.2 billion, a profit of $9.5 billion.[16] A survey made by the First National City Bank concluded that "remitted income [i.e., repatriated profit] on private investment abroad is actually the largest single item of our international receipts apart from merchandise exports."[17] A British survey in 1961 showed that American companies doing business in England averaged a 17 per cent return on their investment, twice as high as the average return in the United States.[18]

For profitability, the underdeveloped world is at least Europe's equal, more probably its superior. Standard Oil of New Jersey *reports* a 17.6 per cent return on its Latin American investment and a 15 per cent return on Eastern Hemisphere invest-

[15] "Special Report on Multinational Companies," *Business Week,* April 20, 1963.

[16] Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, "Notes on the Theory of Imperialism," *Monthly Review,* March 1966.

[17] John Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America,* The Macmillan Company (Collier book), New York, 1965, p. 276.

[18] *Ibid.,* p. 354.

ments for 1962, compared with a 7.4 per cent return on domestic.[19] Commerce Department figures show Americans putting $516 million (new investment and unreturned earnings) into Europe in 1956 and taking home $280 million. By 1961 the nearly 2-to-1 investments-earnings ratio had dropped toward 3 to 1: $1.5 billion new investment, $525 million returned earnings. Compare the figures for Latin America, remembering that the stakes here are the real wealth and real labor of Latin American people, not just so many numbers in a book: In 1956 we invested $500 million and returned a profit almost half again as big, $770 million; for a net capital loss to Latin America of $220 million.[20]

That cold, still statistic of profit and loss is a statement about someone's happiness and someone else's pain, the uneven qualities of the lives of men and women. It needs to be worked, mined, laid open. With some general sense of what the multinational American corporation is doing for itself, we move now to examine the condition of its hosts. Does the global expansion of the American commercial state develop the underdeveloped? Does it democratize the public life of man? Does it make for nations which, in Rostow's words, "stand up straight" and are "strong, assertive, and independent"?

Some cases. . . .

Consider the Free World's Paraguay, where the per capita income is $95 and 25 families own land equal in area to Denmark, Belgium, and Holland combined.[21] Alfredo Stroessner has held absolute dictatorial power since 1954, and probably the best single symbol of his regime's evolving democracy is Peña Hermosa, the Chaco Island prison camp where his unluckier political opponents are being permanently rehabilitated. Has this totalitarianism at least been materially efficient? In 1940, Paraguay had over 2500 industrial firms; there were 700 in 1965. In 1955, the agricultural index was 113.5; in 1965, only one per cent of the land was cultivated and the index was 77.6. Three quarters of the land is timber forest, and wood exports in 1956 were 229,000 tons; in 1961, although demand had increased, exports were little more

[19] Baran and Sweezy cite Standard's *1962 Annual Report.*
[20] Gerassi, p. 355.
[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 125–126.

than half that.[22] The Liberal party's President Carlos Pastore, a wealthy pro-American self-exiled in Uruguay, told John Gerassi: "If all United States aid to Stroessner stopped today, democracy might still be salvageable tomorrow." Gerassi writes:

> When I repeated this to United States Embassy officials in Asunción, they answered, "But Stroessner is anti-Communist." The argument that anti-Communist butchers accelerate Communist takeovers seemed to carry no weight. "In the last analysis," I was told, "our policy is one of survival. Thus, a sure anti-Communist, no matter how despicable, is better than a reformer, no matter how honest, who might turn against us."[23]

Or Free World Haiti. Duvalier has received more than $57 million in AID support and nearly as much in loans from the likes of the World Bank and the Ex-Im Bank;[24] a very few Haitians are very rich, Duvalier is bodily secured by a 20,000-man palace guard trained by the U.S. Marines, and for their part the Haitian people have the lowest school attendance in the hemisphere (5.7 per cent, the next lowest, Bolivia's, being 20.9 per cent), the fewest hospital beds and doctors per inhabitant, and the lowest per capita income ($70) in Latin America.[25] Democratic Americans might prefer their financial support to show better social results than tyrant Duvalier seems able to produce; but American Cold Warriors, on the other hand, might fear that a Haiti without its dollar would be a Haiti without its Duvalier; and without its Duvalier, yet another segment of the Greater Antilles archipelago that shields the strategic Panama Canal Zone might go the way of Cuba.

Jamaica ought to be for Jamaicans that island paradise which the travel advertisements claim it is for others. It has fewer than two million people on 4500 square miles; it is a major exporter of sugar; it does a strong tourist business; and, most importantly, it is the world's leading supplier of bauxite, from which all aluminum blessings flow. How is it that on the base of such wealth this country is in debt to outsiders, with 93 per cent of its people earning less than $480 a year? Jamaica should be the Switzerland

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[24] *Almanac*, pp. 488, 490.
[25] Gerassi, p. 192.

of the Caribbean—at least. But it is not, nor is it moving in that direction. It is moving in the direction of deeper debt to outsiders. And as Jamaica's poverty gets worse, Alcan, Alcoa, Kaiser, and Reynolds continue to ship to the north the Jamaican bauxite which is owned not by Jamaica but by Alcan, Alcoa, Kaiser, and Reynolds.[26]

Venezuela belongs to the same camp. Venezuelan oil and iron have an annual average dockside value of about $4 billion—a solid economic base, it might seem, for a country of some eight million people (3 per cent of whom, however, own 90 per cent of the land). But Venezuela's annual income on the $3 billion in oil she ships each year is only $800—revenues collected from the outsiders who control the oil. Rockefeller's Creole Petroleum Corporation accounts for more than 40 per cent of the total production and sales volume, Mellon's Mene Grande Oil for 15 per cent, Mobil for 5 per cent, and Royal-Dutch Shell for most of the remainder.[27] The government-owned Venezuelan group has "concessionary rights" on less than one per cent of the oil reserve and is too underfinanced for profitable operations.

If the claim that American free enterprise collaborates with the revolution of rising expectations is ever going to be valid, then it ought to be valid for Venezuela, which has absorbed well over $3 billion in direct U.S. investment (behind only Canada, Britain, and Germany), and which has been a favorite territory of the Rockefeller modernizers since the turn of the century. It is indeed true that Venezuela's per capita income is the highest in Latin America; but it is unfortunately also true that it is only $800, that per capita figures by no means represent real national wealth or its distribution,* and that of the gross national product figure upon which this is calculated, well over one third is in

[26] *Ibid.*, 191.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 367–372.

* From per capita income figures, for example, one could conclude that the second loveliest place in the world to live is Kuwait, whose per capita income is $1800—ahead of Canada ($1600), Switzerland ($1400), Sweden ($1300), and Britain ($1100), and not very far behind the United States ($2300).[28] The more revealing figure, much harder to calculate for any country and close to impossible for the underdeveloped, would be the distribution of income, the mean. A huge part of most underdeveloped-country populations is not even in the money economy.

[28] *Almanac*, p. 492.

exports, more than 90 per cent of that third is in oil alone, and that oil income is effectively monopolized by American and European interests.[29]

Moreover, Venezuela's long-term prospects seem still darker: known oil reserves will be exhausted in about fifteen years. Especially since the world oil market is in a protracted glut, it would seem prudent for Venezuela to slow down oil extraction and concentrate now on developing a diversified, balanced, and essentially self-sufficient urban-rural economy. But oil extractions are far from being curtailed. Of the five major oil exporters among the underdeveloped countries (the others are Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq), Venezuela has both the smallest reserves and the highest annual production rate. Kuwait, with reserves of 62 billion barrels in 1960, produced 601 million barrels; Venezuela, with reserves of 17 billion barrels, produced one billion.[30] The fact is that the decision is not Venezuela's to make. Production rates are determined by the outside firms holding the concessionary rights—*rights which are scheduled to expire in 1984.* One may certainly say that Venezuela is being "developed." One then asks: By whom? And to serve whose needs?

The roll is long. We might as well have looked at Iran, where in 1953 the CIA and British intelligence conspired to overthrow Premier Mohammed Mossadeq because he advocated Cold War neutralism for Iran and threatened to nationalize foreign oil-holdings. We might have pursued the career of the James Bond of that operation, the CIA's Kermit Roosevelt, through the time of the coup itself, the subsequent reallocation of Iranian oil rights to the advantage of American companies (Standard and Gulf), on up through 1958 when Gulf made him its "government relations" man and to 1960 when he became a vice president.[31]

Or we might have looked at Guatemala of 1954, where the CIA helped overthrow democratically elected President Arbenz because his modest agrarian reform program threatened unused United Fruit Company plantation land. We might have combed for the implications of the facts that then-Secretary of State John

[29] Gerassi, pp. 20, 32, 155–166.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 368.

[31] Ross and Wise, *The Invisible Government*, Bantam ed., New York, 1965, pp. 116–121.

Foster Dulles' law office had written the United Fruit Company's 1930 and 1936 agreements with Guatemala; that then-Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs John Moors Cabot was a major United Fruit Company shareholder; that then-CIA Director Allan Dulles had been president of the United Fruit Company; that Dulles' predecessor in the CIA directorship, General Walter Beddell Smith, was to become a United Fruit Company vice president in 1955.[32]

Or we might have looked at our Dominican Republic intervention of 1965 and probed the facts that its chief architect, Organization of American States Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, Jr., is a board member of the National Sugar Refining Company, which depends upon privileged access to Dominican sugar; that roving ambassador Averell Harriman's private investment house (Brown Bros. Harriman) owns about 10 per cent of National Sugar; that President Johnson's close friend Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas and a leading rhetorician of corporate liberalism, Adolf Berle, Jr., have sat since 1946 on the board of the Sucrest Company, which imports black-strap molasses from the Dominican Republic; and that former ambassador to the Dominican Republic Joseph Farland is on the board of the South Puerto Rico Sugar Company, which owns 275,000 acres of the best plantation land in the Dominican Republic and is the largest employer on the island (average wage to Dominicans, about a dollar a day).[33]

Or we might have looked at the Philippines, favored child of American anticolonialism, whose "national" constitution's U.S.-

[32] *Ibid.* Paul W. Blackstock, *The Strategy of Subversion,* Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1964, p. 185. Gerassi, p. 241.

[33] On Bunker and National Sugar's Dominican interests, see Joseph P. Lash, "Bunker Hits the Trail Again," New York *Post,* January 27, 1957; *Standard and Poor's* "Sugar—Basic Survey" and "Sugar—Company Survey" for 1963–1965; *Commodity Year Book* (annual) and *International Sugar Journal* (monthly); and Dana L. Thomas, "Richer Sweet," *Barron's,* September 27, 1965. On Harriman and National, see *Standard and Poor's Register of Directors and Officers* (annual) and any recent National *Annual Report.* On Fortas, Berle, and Sucrest, see Charles B. Seib and Alan I. Otten, "Abe, Help—LBJ," *Esquire,* June 1965; *Who's Who in America;* Sucrest *Annual Report.* On Farland, see South Puerto Rico's 1965 *Annual Report.* I am indebted for this data to Michael Locker of SDS.

drafted "parity amendment" prohibits Filipinos from protecting their internal markets and resources against American commercial penetration—that is, effectively obstructs the development of an independent Filipino entrepreneurial class.[34]

Or at Liberia, another child of American humanism, whose rubber plantations have netted Firestone an average net profit three times the amount of the entire Liberian national revenue, and whose rich iron deposits in the Nimba range have been conceded to private European and American (Bethlehem Steel) interests.[35]

Or at hapless Ghana, whose anti-Nkrumah coup of February 1966 appears to have had CIA support, and which in any case led at once to the explicit opening of the Ghanaian door to U.S. business and the collapse of Ghanaian efforts to achieve diversified self-sufficiency. As E. N. Omaboe, the new regime's chief economic official, told a New York meeting of the African-American Chamber of Commerce on May 20, 1966: "We want New England and Californian fishermen to fish our coasts and set up canneries." As enticements, Omaboe offered ten-year tax exemption, duty-free import of materials, and a guarantee that on the outside chance of an expropriation the settlement would be arbitrated by the World Bank.[36]

Or at India, two thirds of whose currency is controlled by the United States government, which used this leverage to help persuade Madam Gandhi that fertilizer plants run by expensive Rockefeller oil were better for India than fertilizer plants run by cheap Iranian gas.[37]

Or at Indonesia, where history's most appalling bloodbath and the new government's return or "purchase" of formerly nationalized American rubber and oil holdings led directly to the resumption of U.S. aid.[38]

But the list is endless. We should attempt a generalization.

The United States has shown in Europe that it knows how

[34] A. Orlov, "The Philippines," *International Affairs,* November 1965.
[35] Nkrumah, pp. 60, 66.
[36] *NYT,* May 21, 1966.
[37] *NYT,* June 19, 1966.
[38] *NYT,* April 8, 1966.

to reconstruct bombed-out capitalist economies. But it has not shown in the Third World that it can develop Western-style political economies: in preindustrial countries where there is no capitalist class structure, no entrepreneurial tradition, no skilled urbanized work force, and no internalized commitment to capitalist life-styles, the arrival of the American corporatist is in fact a disaster. Preoccupied with the extraction of resources for export and the immediate exploitation of all opportunities without regard to the damage this does to others, our business statesmanship may justly claim to have excited the underdeveloped world's growing revolutionary demands. But it is nothing but double talk for this same statesmanship to pretend that it assents to those demands—the demands for unobstructed opportunity to develop the natural wealth of the nation, for time and freedom to cultivate a national economic style, for exemption from the Cold War, for political independence.

America is not baby-simple, and her imperialism has other moods. There is, for example, the apparently genuine effort of some AID (and even some CIA) people to foster social reform under frustrating and often dangerous conditions; there is the Peace Corps, which, as badly as it has been abused, no doubt embodies a popular American willingness to be of help to other people; there is the Asian Rice Institute in the Philippines, a joint effort of the Rockefeller and Ford foundations which may prove very valuable to the people of Asia. If these represented the behavioral core, the main driving force of American foreign policy, a political humanist could throw his efforts behind that policy without much hesitation. But all imperialisms have produced their mercy angels; and one has to conclude that the good people of AID, the Peace Corps, the Rice Institute, are performing only marginal and auxiliary roles. The America which the rising world most deeply experiences is the America of United Fruit and the U.S. Marines, cool plunder, and the napalm fist. One may wish that the Peace Corps were the State Department. It is not even a match for the CIA's third string. America is not the friend but the enemy of that deformed, uneven, frustrated, and frightening revolution whose fundamental motives seem so compelling and whose fundamental claims seem so just.

It is hard to see how it could be otherwise with the corpo-

rate state. Adolf Berle, Jr., who has been a sympathetically insightful analyst of American corporatism, has himself recognized that "preachments about the value of private enterprise and investment and the usefulness of foreign capital [in the underdeveloped countries] were . . . a little silly. . . . Foreign and/or private investment may industrialize, may even increase production, and still leave the masses in as bad a shape as ever."[39] It may seem strange to hear as much from Berle. But worried corporate capitalists are not at all hard to find. It is often from them, in fact, that we get the most perceptive and realistic descriptions of Free World imperialism's effects on the backward. Gerassi quotes the 1958 statement of M. P. Grace, Jr., President of Grace & Co., whose Latin American profits are immense: "Chile, Peru, Mexico, and Bolivia," said Grace, "have seen the export prices of their metals drop from 40 per cent to 50 per cent during the last several years. At the same time, since 1951, the average price that Latin America pays for its imports from the United States has risen about 11 per cent."[40]

The editors of *Fortune* have pointed out that the long-term debt of the underdeveloped countries, some $40 billion in 1966, cost $4.5 billion annually in interest charges and consumes one eighth of all their foreign-trade earnings. "To get enough foreign exchange for what they import, [underdeveloped countries] have to borrow more, which in turn means they will have to meet greater servicing costs."[41] Sanz de Santamaria, chairman of the Inter-American Committee of the Alliance for Progress, has made the same point: "[Latin American] debt amortization alone will require $1.7 billion this year [1966], thus pre-empting 16 per cent of all export earnings."[42] Josué de Castro, one of Brazil's foremost economists and a former president of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, has written of the Alliance for Progress that it "is nothing but pure colonialism. . . . Colonialism is the only cause of hunger in Latin America."[43]

That might seem a bitter exaggeration. But there is only a difference of tone, not of substance, between that statement

[39] Gerassi, p. 275.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[41] *Fortune,* June 1966.
[42] *Economic Affairs,* June 1, 1966.
[43] Gerassi, p. 263.

and the following passages from the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*:

> The industrial nations have added nearly $2 billion to their reserves, which now total $52 billion. At the same time, the reserves of the less-developed group not only have stopped rising, but have declined some $200 million. To analysts such as Britain's [Barbara] Ward, the significance of such statistics is clear: the economic gap is rapidly widening "between a white, complacent, highly bourgeois, very wealthy, very small North Atlantic elite and everybody else, and this is not a very comfortable heritage to leave to one's children." "Everybody else" includes approximately two thirds of the population of the earth, spread through about 100 nations. . . . Many diplomats and economists view the implications as overwhelmingly—and dangerously—political. Unless the present decline can be reversed, these analysts fear, the United States and other wealthy industrial powers of the West face the distinct possibility, in the words of Miss Ward, "of a sort of international class war."[44]

But there is rarely any indication that this problem is *caused* by someone, that it is in preponderant part caused by American corporations, that this problem (instead of communism) is what lies behind Third-World revolution. Indeed, there is always an implicit suggestion that the man who can solve this problem best is none other than the Free World capitalist himself. It seems to be certainly true that many aspects of the development problem could be solved by that figure—if he would just remove himself from the picture. But how will he be persuaded to do that? To surrender in someone else's name the immense profits which he considers it his main business to make? Further, how is his disengagement to be achieved by a government which has always considered his foreign successes to be America's domestic successes, and which is unalterably committed to the political ideology of free enterprise?

Consider that the capitalist's commitment to capitalism does not entail a commitment to other capitalists. The ideology obliges him only to *compete,* and the interwoven morality obliges him to win *as much as he can.* If his dominance is to be restricted, his victories contained, that will only happen through the independ-

[44] *Wall Street Journal,* May 12, 1965.

ent competitive action of other capitalists. In theory, this is indeed how the system is supposed to operate: New entrepreneurs, new capitalists, steadily emerge to create and wield new power, and thus continuously reconstitute the dynamics of the open, free market. But we have noticed a problem: Even in our own supposedly model economy, there is an accelerating breakout from this theoretically internalized and permanent system of competition-based limits. The competition is won, and the winner gets stronger; lost, and the loser gets weaker. Power condenses in the hands of steadily smaller, steadily more integrated and collaborative victor groups. And the federal government, not so very long ago the American businessman's arch enemy, now becomes his delighted and delightful partner. Without the federal government's Special Forces and Marines, United Fruit could not dominate Guatemala. Without AID and the World Bank and the supportive hands of the Commerce and State Departments, the corporations could not multinationalize themselves. Without the federal government's sugar subsidies, the sugar companies could not maintain their lethal grip on the economics of small states from the Caribbean to the Central Pacific. Without the State Department's Cold War sales campaign and the active support of the Defense Department's weapon hucksters, General Dynamics could not continue to fatten on arms sales to Europe. Without big government, big business would be lost. . . .

Will someone claim that the appetite for dominance which stimulated the growth of this corporate state will restrain itself when it goes on foreign cruises? David Rockefeller may very well exhort his fellow businessmen to "demonstrate [to Latin Americans] that a new brand of capitalism has evolved, based on the concept of a fair profit for free enterprise combined with social responsibility to the community as a whole."[45] And he may very well hope that someone takes his advice, for the businessman who does so, this same Rockefeller will crush. The idea of capitalism is that the "fair profit" will not have to be determined by a Christian capitalist alone with his morality. It will be set through his act of competing with *other* capitalists. Then where are the competitive capitalists of the Third World? And how are they to be produced? And who is to produce them?

[45] Rockefeller, *loc. cit.*

Nothing the American businessman can see in past, present, or future will persuade him to forgo whatever commercial advantages may come to hand. *And for him, the Third World is a commercial advantage.* The Third World is that exposed, unprotected gold mine where his investment dollars fare better than anywhere else. Why should he want to change that? The United Fruit Company may be "enlightened," may (sometimes does, sometimes does not) build roads, houses, schools, and hospitals in model company towns on its plantations in the "banana republics." But why should it want to surrender its privileged position there, all in the name of some fuzzy humanitarian ideal?

5

United States Wealth and Power in Latin America

James Petras

Beginning with the Second World War and especially with the growth of the Cold War, a new type of academician and a new type of literature emerged: the cold war scholar and cold war scholarship.[1] In contrast to earlier studies, the new writing emphasized the harmony of interest of the U.S. and Latin America —an ideology which fitted perfectly with the needs of the U.S. as the dominant power in the hemisphere. U.S. business exploitation

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[1] For a fuller discussion see "U.S.-Latin American Studies: A Critical Assessment," *Science and Society*, Spring, 1968.

of Latin America and the interventionist policies of the U.S. were summarily dealt with; rather than explore the problem of imperialism it was put in quotes, labelled communist or Marxist or leftist propaganda and neatly avoided. The new focus was on the aid and comfort which U.S. policy and business was giving to Latin America. The differences between liberals and conservatives was one of emphasis: how much U.S. financing or private investment would be "best" for Latin America; what was the best way for the U.S. to repress revolution: the "right" mix of violence and economic instruments. Whenever ugly facts appeared and reappeared, overt U.S. intervention in Guatemala in 1954, Cuba in 1961, the Dominican Republic in 1965, which made the harmony of interest ideology a transparent myth, the cold war academicians dragged in ad hoc explanations and went about their business.

In recent years there has developed a counter-trend to U.S. cold war scholarship which does not accept its assumptions, commitments or its attempt to gloss over the obvious inconsistencies between the rhetoric of the Alliance for Progress and "inter-Americanism" and the dominant exploitative position of U.S. capitalism in this hemisphere.[2]

As one approach to understanding some aspects of U.S.-Latin American relations I propose to discuss (1) the arguments of the neo-imperialist school, (2) U.S. capitalism's stake in Latin America, (3) the source of recruitment of some important U.S. policymakers who are involved with Latin America, (4) the inter-relationship of U.S. policy and corporate capitalism, (5) transmission belts of U.S. policy, (6) impact of U.S. policy and business on Latin America.

Among what we might refer to as the "neo-imperialist"[3] school of economic thought an argument that one frequently hears among students of the multi-national corporation goes along the following lines: It is probable that national *sovereignty* of the underdeveloped countries will sooner or later be inconsistent

[2] A selection of essays is found in Zeitlin and Petras (editors), *Latin America: Reform or Revolution* (Fawcett Publications: 1968).

[3] For the material in this section, I am largely indebted to Professor James O'Connor who is preparing a comprehensive study of imperialism which should greatly add to our understanding of the phenomenon.

with the existence of the giant multi-national corporations. U.S. corporations are achieving economic hegemony and increasingly shaping the overall culture of these underdeveloped regions. However, contrary to the Marxists, this is a good thing because the multi-national corporation is the channel for the transmission of technology, know-how, modernization, etc.

Unfortunately for the argument there is not much evidence to support it either historically or in the contemporary world. In his study *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America,* Andre Gunder Frank has persuasively argued that, historically, Latin America's underdevelopment has been due to the advanced capitalist countries.[4] In brief, he points out that the imperialist countries have all along extracted wealth from the satellites for their own development leading to greater social and economic disparities despite changes in the nature of economic activity in the satellites. The result is that capitalism on a world scale produces a developing metropolis and an underdeveloping periphery, a process that is repeated on a national scale between the local metropolis and its domestic satellite regions and sectors. To test his hypothesis that it is the subordination of the satellites to the metropolis which causes underdevelopment Frank presents evidence on the cases of "limited development" which have occurred in Latin America. The spurts of growth occur in those satellite regions that were less strongly tied to the metropolis and thus had the opportunity for greater autonomous development, especially industrial development (Sao Paulo and Minas Gerais). Also, he argues effectively that it was when the links between satellites and metropolis were weakest (the First and Second World Wars and the depression of the 1930s) that the greatest development occurred. Contrary to the neo-imperialist thesis, the history of Latin American development suggests that independence from, not alliance or integration with, the metropolis permitted short term development.

In modern times the multi-national corporation, far from encouraging dynamic and balanced economic growth, makes it difficult or impossible to achieve economic integration in Latin

[4] Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967). See also "Brazil: Exploitation or Aid," *The Nation,* November 16, 1963, pp. 318–323.

American countries. U.S. corporations integrate the resources of Latin America—especially bauxite, oil, copper, etc.—into their own structures. The West Indian economist, Lloyd Best, in his analysis of the role of the multi-national corporation in the Caribbean pointed out:

> . . . perhaps the most important characteristic of the regional economies is that they are dominated by a series of international corporations. Moreover these corporations form parts of wider international systems of resource allocation. This is true of the mining corporations, the sugar companies, the hotel chains, the banking, hire purchase and insurance houses, the advertising companies, the newspapers and the television and radio stations . . . in so far as there is harmonization among these concerns, it is for the most part achieved within the context of the metropolitan economies where they are based, and not in the peripheral economies of the countries where the companies actually operate. Moreover, the policies of the corporations are determined by their parent companies operating somewhere in the northern hemisphere and not by the local need to integrate industries and to increase interdependence between different sectors of the economy. The economy is, therefore, hardly more than a locus of production made up of a number of fragments held tenuously together largely by Government controls—themselves often borrowed from elsewhere. In other words it is to be appreciated that it seems to be inherent in the structure of the international corporations which operate in the region that the Caribbean economies remain fragmented and unintegrated. It is not merely a question of the flow of goods, though that is important; it is principally that the corporations are the channels through which metropolitan technology and forms of organization are introduced into the economy with little reference to the overall domestic factor market.

A similar point is made by Glaucio Soares regarding what he refers to as the "new industrialization" in Brazil.[5] Precisely because of the growing importance of U.S. owned corporations and because of the transmission of modern new capital intensive technology, higher levels of productivity are achieved without considerable expansion of industrial employment. Soares, through detailed analysis and comparison of census data, shows that the

[5] Glaucio Ary Dillon Soares, "The New Industrialization and the Brazilian Political System" in Zeitlin and Petras, op. cit., pp. 186–201.

economy influenced by externally integrated, modern corporations is neither able to absorb the growing urban populations in industrial production nor employ them in the administrative sector. Instead, the economy dominated by the multi-national corporation is weakened by chronic underemployment and unemployment.

The typical response of the neo-imperialist school to the problem of malintegration of the multi-national corporations into the underdeveloped economy is that taxation can integrate these companies into the local economy. But the fact is that taxation where it has been tried, has not worked. In Chile, taxation has been used to increase imports, not to integrate the companies into the local economy. In addition, a tax policy does not work because the large foreign owned companies are highly integrated and hence can choose to take their profits out either at the branch plant or at the level of the home office. Thus if local taxes are high, the parent firm can charge the subsidiary high fees for managerial services, materials, etc., reaping the profits at the level of the parent firm.

Corporation decisions are made for the sake of profits, not for the interests of the country in which the branch plant is located. For example, U.S. subsidiaries are forced by the parent to buy materials from the parent corporation though in many cases it would be more profitable for the colonized country if these subsidiaries could purchase their supplies elsewhere. The dependent countries get only a small fraction of the total value added in the production and sales of the raw materials extracted by the giant U.S. corporations integrated into the U.S. industrial economy. . . .

In summary, we can say that U.S. business has an enormous profitable stake in Latin America; that the status quo—underdeveloped, dependent, colonial economies—provides valuable sources of profit and resource payoffs to U.S. capitalism.

What sort of individuals preside over this North American empire? Are U.S. advisers and policy-makers on Latin America disinterested Pan-Americans promoting freedom and progress, or are they the guardians entrusted by the social-economic ruling class to defend their profits and investments against Latin American development and reform aspirations?

Perhaps the best way to deal with the question of the interrelation of business and policy is to cite an important case in recent history: U.S. policy with respect to the Dominican Republic. A recently prepared study by two staff members of the newly formed North American Congress on Latin America points out that the key officials selected by President Johnson as advisers, and the key officials who made the actual decisions leading to the U.S. suppression of the popular revolution, were corporation lawyers and directors with a direct or indirect economic stake in the status quo ante:

> The powerful U.S. economic interests, with a stake in the outcome of Dominican events, most certainly had access to U.S. Administration officials and most likely expressed their deep concern. For example, prominent New Dealer Abe Fortas was a director of the Sucrest Corporation for 20 years, third largest East Coast cane sugar refiner; Adolf A. Berle, Jr., known Latin American expert and advisor to several presidents, was Chairman of the Board of Sucrest for 18 years and is still a director and large stockholder; Ellsworth Bunker was Chairman, President, and 38-year Director of the second largest East Coast cane sugar refiner, National Sugar Refining Corporation (partially founded by his father), and one-time stockholder in a Dominican sugar mill; Roving Ambassador W. Averell Harriman is a "limited partner" in the banking house of Brown Brothers, Harriman, which owns 5 percent of National Sugar's stock (his brother, E. Roland Harriman, sits on the board of National Sugar); J. M. Kaplan, molasses magnate, is a large contributor and influential advisor to many Democratic Party candidates and the ADA; Joseph S. Farland, State Department consultant and ex-U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, is a director of South Puerto Rico Sugar Company; Roswell Gilpatrick, Deputy Secretary of Defense, is the managing executive partner in the Wall Street firm of Cravath, Swaine, and Moore, legal counsel to National Sugar; and Max Rabb, partner in the Wall Street firm of Strook, Strook, and Lavan, legal counsel for Sucrest, is an influential Johnson supporter. The above sugar refiners, plus the largest U.S. refiner, American Sugar, depend directly on the Dominican sugar and molasses supply for their operations. Any disruption in the supply would seriously hamper price stability. Even without these direct economic interests, it would be difficult for these gentlemen in their "neutral" decision making roles to escape the assumptions, inclina-

tions, and priorities inculcated by their economic and social milieu.[6]

Thus far we have indicated that U.S. corporation and economic elite control strategic areas of Latin American economic activity and that corporate representatives play an important role as policy-makers concerning Latin America. It is also important to examine the actual policies adopted by those policy-makers to protect and enhance the position of the U.S. corporate rich and to maintain overall U.S. hegemony in the hemisphere.

Mixed in with the reformist rhetoric of the Charter of Punta del Este, which established the Alliance for Progress, there is a significant clause pushed by U.S. policy-makers which committed the Latin governments to the promotion "of conditions that will encourage the flow of foreign investments." To secure investors, Congress passed the Foreign Assistance Act in 1961, and a 1963 amendment which prohibited the use of congressional appropriations to benefit a state that fails to make "speedy compensation ... in *convertible* foreign exchange ... to the full value," of any property expropriated from U.S. citizens.[7] Any Latin country, not submitting to the guarantees of U.S. investors and to their "rights" to convert their profits to dollars and to remit their profits, was to be cut off from all aid as of December 31, 1966.[8] ...

The 1961 Foreign Assistance Act stipulated that U.S. aid be used to favor the U.S. economy. Latin Americans cannot even shop in other markets since virtually all loans from the U.S. are now tied to purchases of goods and services in the U.S. Ninety-five per cent of AID expenditures for machinery and vehicles were made to U.S. corporations.[9] Ninety per cent of all AID commodity expenditures were made to U.S. corporations. The same practice is followed by the Inter-American Development Bank.

[6] Fred Goff and Michael Locker, *The Violence of Domination: U.S. Power and the Dominican Republic* (mimeo.) (published by North American Congress on Latin America, Box 57, Cathedral Station, New York City).

[7] The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended, Section 620(e)(1) *Regional and Other Documents Concerning United States Relations with Latin America,* House Committee on Foreign Affairs (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966) p. 143, quoted in J. P. Morray, "The United States and Latin America," in Zeitlin and Petras, *Latin America,* p. 109.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *U.S. Statistical Abstract 1967,* p. 827.

The Alliance for Progress, as a policy device, was used to further the interests of U.S. investors. Essentially, Alliance policy, implemented through a variety of legislative and administrative measures, was concerned with creating a favorable climate for U.S. investment.[10] The social reform and economic development goals of the Alliance were assumed to be compatible with the larger purposes of securing a primary role for U.S. investment. In operational terms, the position and advantages sought by foreign investors formed the "parameters" of the discussion of other goals. Evaluating the Alliance for Progress from this vantage point, one could agree with David Rockefeller, when, in 1965, he said, "The climate of investment is improving."[11]

Regarding its primary function, the Alliance dealt with two specific issues: *protecting* existing investment and its earning power, and *creating* new opportunities for profit making. The Alliance for Progress was a government administered welfare program for the U.S. investors. The Alliance operation functioned on two inter-related levels. Increased U.S. government funds were utilized in subsidizing insecure Latin governments incapable of implementing internal changes. Latin governments, which were recipients of Alliance funds, made concessions and agreements with the U.S. government and U.S. firms that created a favorable climate for investment and increased their profit returns. . . .

It should be pointed out right from the beginning that there were divergent approaches among U.S. policy-makers over the best way to promote investor interests. There were heated debates between the Department of State and Congress over the timing and way in which a favorable climate could be best reestablished. Some congressmen took a hard line which involved issuing ultimatums to Latin governments, that would stipulate that either they proceed immediately according to a prescribed path or face severe sanctions. For the State Department, it was more a matter of taking a strategic view, the adoption of flexible tactics in the face of adverse circumstances, in order to gain time until a particular situation could be changed to advantage. In

[10] Fowler Hamilton, head of AID, stated "there will *have* to be a climate in the area that will attract foreign capital and keep domestic capital at home." Quoted in John Hickey, "The First Year: Business," *Inter-American Economic Affairs,* Summer, 1962, p. 50.

[11] "The Fourth Year: The Role of Private Business," *Inter-American Economic Affairs,* Vol. 20, Autumn, 1966, p. 71.

1962, in his opposition to the inflexible approach to defending investors abroad, Dean Rusk remarked: "I don't believe the United States can afford to stake its interests in other countries on a particular private investment in a particular situation. We have to keep working at these things."[12] The Secretary of State took the long view ". . . . I would hope we would not use legislative mandates which in effect would cause us to break relations with important countries over particular points of policy, because in the longer run, it seems to me, that leads us into many blind alleys."[13] Translated into policy, the State Department's mode of operation was quite successful. The Brazilian case can illustrate the point. On February 16, 1962, Governor Brizola expropriated the property of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. Congress clamored for economic sanctions in order to protect foreign investors. The State Department did better. The State Department pressured Brizola to pay the companies the price they desired in turn for which the U.S. Government agreed to reimburse the Brazilian Government out of Alliance for Progress funds.[14]

U.S. corporations dictated State Department policy and substantially benefited. Rusk himself admitted that the policy adopted was the result of U.S. investor influence. The key to the apparent paradox of U.S. corporations supporting the expropriation action of an apparently left-wing Latin nationalist was explained by Rusk: "A number of them (U.S. corporations) would prefer to sell out their utility holdings and then reinvest in industries in the same country that have access to a free market situation. This is on the initiative of some of the companies."[15] Because U.S. corporations determined U.S. policy Alliance for Progress funds were spent in expropriating unprofitable U.S. firms at above market prices. In turn, U.S. corporations used the funds procured to invest in more profitable activities, receiving special dispensations on the amount of profit which was remitted. Following the flexible handling of the incident, the State Department was in a position to continue toward its strategic goal, elimi-

[12] Quoted in John Hickey, *op. cit.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 59 passim.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

nation of the Brazilian nationalist government. A sudden break in relations in 1962 as advocated by parochial congressmen might not have secured either the benefits to the utility investors nor created a favorable situation for the rest of the U.S. corporate community. By staying and working within Brazil, the U.S. was able to participate in the overthrow of the Brazilian government, and influence the new military dictatorship. The outcome was a government that more than met the criteria of the U.S. Congressmen regarding the protection and encouragement of U.S. corporations.[16] An investment guarantee treaty was signed in which Brazil agreed to surrender its right to nationalize U.S. property. Control on profit remittances and tax concession were considerably loosened. In a word, the flexible approach of the State Department, the manipulation of Alliance funds, was successful in creating a favorable climate for foreign investment in the period of two years.

The Alliance for Progress serves U.S. investors by servicing the past debts of the Latin countries. In their striving to maximize profits in Latin America, U.S. and foreign creditors had overextended themselves. The level of external debt of the Latin countries had reached the point where most of them were unable to meet their payments. The Alliance for Progress stepped in and has rescued the financiers. Estimates of the proportion of Alliance funds, used to benefit foreign creditors, run from 25 to 40 per cent of Alliance disbursements during the first four years.[17] By maintaining the appearance of solvency in Latin America, the Alliance attempts to maintain a favorable climate for foreign investments....

In so-called "democracies" and in the dictatorships U.S. policy-makers have in the past few years succeeded in utilizing the Alliance for Progress as an effective financial instrument for furthering the interests of private U.S. investors. Through political and military means, U.S. policy-makers have, in the post Cuban Revolutionary period, re-created a favorable climate for foreign investors: between 1961 and 1965, profit remittances in-

[16] See Carl Oglesby, "Free World Empire," in Oglesby and Shaull, *Containment and Change* (Macmillan, 1967), esp. pp. 83–97.

[17] "The Fourth Year: The Fatal Barrier to Growth and Reform: Latin America's Economic Philosophy," *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, Vol. 20, Autumn, 1966, p. 63.

creased by some 200 million a year and royalties and fees increased by some 60 million per year.[18] Latin America's debt increased to 11 billion by 1964, and the foreign debt servicing burden rose from 5.5 per cent on balance of payments receipts on current account in 1956, to 15.4 per cent in 1964.[19] It is no wonder that David Rockefeller can say that the Program of the Alliance for Progress is succeeding. But not for everyone.

The AID Specific Risk Investment Guarantee Program as of September, 1966, covered 75 countries. Under its terms, the President of the U.S. assures U.S. investors protection in whole or part against any or all of the following risks: (1) inability to convert into U.S. dollars other currencies, or credits in such currencies, received as earnings or profits from the approved project, as repayment or return of the investment therein, in whole or in part, or as compensation of the sale or disposition of all or any part thereof; (2) loss of investment, in whole or in part in the approved project due to expropriation or confiscation by action of a foreign government; (3) loss due to war, revolution or insurrection.[20]

The Guaranteed Investment treaties are, for all intents and purposes, a guaranteed annual profit for investors. The supposed "risk" which investors take and for which they "earn" their profits is nonexistent.

Specific clauses of the Investment Guarantee Program have larger implications: for example, in order for a corporation to be eligible, a U.S. citizen must own over 50 per cent of the stock—thus encouraging U.S. ownership and control.[21] Under the Investment survey section of the Guarantee Program, and in pursuit of its major goals of promoting capitalist expansion and corporate profits, AID has authority, under Section 231 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, to pay up to 50 per cent of the costs of a survey of profit-making opportunities in the less developed countries.[22] Among the criteria that AID stipulates as governing its investment guarantee policy, it mentions that "The investment

[18] "The Fourth Year," *op. cit.*, p. 73.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[20] *Specific Risk Investment Guaranty Handbook, op. cit.*, p. 41.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[22] *Aids to Business, op. cit.* (1966 version), p. 8.

must benefit the economy of the foreign country, with emphasis on the private sector." A judge in this matter of "benefits" is the same private investor: "In evaluating the effect of each investment upon the economy of the underdeveloped country, heavy reliance will be placed upon the representations of the investor and upon views of the AID mission."[23]

In addition to the Specific Risk agreements protecting investors against losses from war, revolution, or insurrection, there are now "extended risks guarantees which protect investors against losses occurring from any normal business risk in certain situations."[24]

The U.S. government has committed itself a long way in a great many countries to "create a favorable climate for foreign investment." The linkage of the U.S. government and U.S. investors vis-à-vis the Latin American governments and all the rest of the colonial so-called "third world" is explicit and concrete. Any attempt by these governments to exercise their sovereignty by expropriating private U.S. investors, immediately confronts the U.S. government. This internal act *automatically* becomes an action involving inter-state affairs. The U.S. government has escalated the "class struggle" to the point where every policy affecting U.S. investors within a country becomes "international." In this specific concrete sense, the class struggle has become "internationalized."

In summary, U.S. business interests are strongly represented in important policy-making positions and are in a position to direct national resources and legislation to increasing their sales, profits, and control over Latin America.

U.S. policy-makers are not merely a reflection of business interests. The strategists in Washington actively promote policies which transcend the interests of any particular group. They seek to provide a long-term institutional framework for creating stable satellites throughout the hemisphere. The strategy of U.S. policy-makers toward Latin America has focused on the creation of new regional organizations of control. A key factor in this counter-

[23] *Specific Risk Investment Guaranty Handbook* (revised October, 1965), *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[24] AID press release, March 14, 1966.

revolutionary strategy is the promotion of an Inter-American army.

The U.S. is presently involved with its own military forces in a number of Latin countries. U.S. officials have for some time organized and planned military strategy against national revolutionary movements. U.S. politico-military strategists overthrew the reformist governments in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, and British Guiana; they collaborated with the military in overthrowing the elected Brazilian and Bolivian governments; they attempted to overthrow the Cuban government, only to be defeated at Playa Giron by the Cuban people under the leadership of Fidel Castro. Both in word and deed, the U.S. has already decided on intervention to defend its Latin empire.

U.S. policy-makers are attempting to move from the consolidation of bilateral military-political alliances, with its client governments, toward implementation of a hemispheric military force, with members from throughout the continent, capable of intervening in any Latin country to suppress popular revolutions. Ex-Secretary of Defense McNamara, expressed the spirit of current U.S. policy when he noted: "In Uruguay, protracted economic stagnation has contributed to popular unrest, which recently culminated in a serious wave of strikes throughout the country. Our military assistance to Uruguay is oriented toward improving the small arms, ammunition, communications and transportation equipment of its security forces."[25] McNamara's admission that his policy of violence is directed against "popular unrest" caused by "protracted economic stagnation" is perhaps the best indication of U.S. policy.

At Baylor University in 1965, Lyndon Johnson, in a speech celebrating the U.S. massacre of three thousand Dominican freedom fighters, declared war on nationalist revolutions in Latin America: "In today's world with the enemies of freedom talking about wars of national liberation, the old distinction between the civil war and international war has already lost much of its mean-

[25] Government Documents, U.S. Department of Defense Estimate of the Latin American Situation, February, 1966. (Statement of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before a joint session of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations for the fiscal years 1967–71 Defense Program and 1967 Budget.)

ing."[26] He went on to call for "new international machinery"—an Inter-American army of counter-revolution. The Inter-American army provides the U.S. with a critical organizational weapon: (1) it allows for the centralization of power, including decision making, and concentrates overwhelming violence in a single authority, (2) it allows for the efficient mobilization of resources at a moment's notice, (3) it preserves U.S. corporate hegemony at a minimum of costs which might have unsettling domestic effects (dead soldiers).

Official governmental agencies are not the only means of implementing U.S. corporate capitalism's policies.[27] The U.S. trade union leadership, AFL-CIO, in co-operation with the CIA and U.S. corporations in Latin America, has played a complementary role. Together, they have trained and financed an apparatus to subvert and destroy militant unions that defend their nation and members' interests and to collaborate with dictators and pro-U.S. business interests. The National Student Association financed by, and in association with U.S. government agencies, served as a transmission belt for propaganda and as a means of subverting Latin organizations and their leaders. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, partially financed by the CIA, operated on the intellectual front, its intellectuals in uniform driving home the "lessons" of anti-communism. U.S. universities strive mightily to "depoliticize" Latin American universities, attempting to reduce opposition to repressive governments and robbing the downtrodden populace of one of its important tribunes.

From the Latin side, the most successful transmission belts of U.S. policy are military dictators, like Barrientos and the late Castelo Branco, and in general, the status quo oriented politicians and social forces.

What are the results of policies, drawn up by the representatives of corporate capitalism and designed to promote a favorable investment climate for the interests of U.S. investors in Latin America?

Over two-thirds of the Latin countries are ruled by military

[26] U.S. Senate, Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 89th Congress, First Session, June 1, 1965, pp. 11697, 11698.

[27] For a fuller discussion see *The CIA File,* by the editors of *Ramparts* (McGraw-Hill).

dictators or military controlled civilian governments. Assassination is a prominent feature of politics of two products of direct U.S. intervention (Guatemala and the Dominican Republic).[28] Little has been done in the way of agrarian reform: five per cent of the landholders still own over 70 per cent of the land. In Chile, the latest U.S. showcase, only 8,000 families have received land in three years—leaving 342,000 families still waiting for Frei's revolution in liberty to mature.[29] Despite all the State Department's propaganda and guarantees to "free enterprise," the latest figures on the Latin economies indicate continuing stagnation: overall per capita GNP growth for Latin America for 1966 and 1967 was 1.6 per cent, well below the *minimum* goal of 2.5 per cent per capita growth called for in the Charter of Punta del Este.[30] Of the 18 countries, only five reached the minimum goal, while several countries (Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Haiti) had negative growth rates for the two year period.[31]

In summary, U.S. policy in promoting and furthering the interests of U.S. corporate capitalism, constricts Latin economic and social development and promotes Latin instability and authoritarian governments. The Latin American poor get poorer; and the rich, especially the foreign rich, get richer.

We find that the U.S. multi-national corporation has developed a global perspective, necessitating the U.S. government to develop a global foreign policy. The main concern of the multinational corporations is profits and economic hegemony, any economic development that takes place in the underdeveloped countries is incidental. It is a myth that Latin America needs U.S. foreign investment since the multi-national corporations mobilize most of their capital in Latin America through earnings and loans, and since the export of capital from Latin America is greater than the net inflow.

[28] On Guatemala see Eduardo Galeano, "With the Guerrillas in Guatemala," in Zeitlin and Petras, *op. cit.* On the Dominican Republic, James Petras, "Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration," selection 8 in this reader.

[29] Report of the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress (CIAF), November, 1967.

[30] *Alliance for Progress Weekly Newsletter,* Vol. VI, No. 4, January 22, 1968.

[31] *Ibid.*

6

The Containment of Socialism

Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy

To explain why United States military needs expanded rapidly during the postwar period, we have to go beyond a theory based on past capitalist experience and take account of a new historical phenomenon, the rise of a world socialist system as a rival and alternative to the world capitalist system. Why should the rise of a socialist rival generate steadily mounting military needs on the part of the capitalist leader nation? . . .

The American oligarchy's need for a huge military machine must be sought elsewhere than in a nonexistent threat of Soviet aggression. Once we recognize this and free our minds of the cant and confusion generated by the oligarchy's ideological and propagandistic distortions, we shall soon discover what we are looking for: the same implacable hatred of socialism, the same determination to destroy it, that has dominated the leading nations of the capitalist world from the time the Bolsheviks seized power in November 1917. The central purpose has always been the same: to prevent the expansion of socialism, to compress it into as small an area as possible, and ultimately to wipe it off the face of the earth. What has changed with changing conditions are the methods and strategies used to achieve these unchanging goals.

When the Soviet regime was young and weak, there seemed real promise in financing and supplying its counter-revolutionary opponents and invading its territory. When these efforts failed—owing in considerable measure to the resistance of the war-weary workers of the capitalist countries—a *cordon sanitaire* of reac-

From Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital, An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1968, pp. 183, 186–188, 190–207.

tionary client states was erected on the USSR's western boundaries, and a period of uneasy stalemate had to be accepted. A decade later came the policy of building up the German and Japanese military machines and pushing them toward an eventual attack on the Soviet Union. This strategy backfired—so badly, indeed, as to force the Western powers into an alliance with their intended victim. When the smoke had cleared from the battlefields, the Soviet Union was still there—and the *cordon sanitaire* had been replaced by a protective belt of socialist countries reaching into the heart of Europe. Thus, beginning in a handful of Czarist Russia's industrial cities, socialist power had spread out to embrace the vast area from the Elbe to the Pacific. The traditional centers of capitalism in Europe and Asia now either lay in ruins or were staggering along, barely able to stave off economic collapse. Furthermore, most of the colonial and semi-colonial countries were in ferment, with socialist forces for the first time presenting a serious challenge to long-established regimes. Clearly, world capitalism was facing an unprecedented crisis.

In this crisis the United States stepped forward and assumed full leadership of a great capitalist counter-offensive. The idea took shape in President Truman's mind at least as early as the autumn of 1945, but American public opinion was not yet prepared for it. It took more than a year of intense anti-Communist propaganda—of which Winston Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain" speech, delivered at Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946, was perhaps the highlight—before Truman and his advisers judged that the people and their representatives in Congress were ready to underwrite a world-wide anti-socialist crusade.

On February 24, 1947, the British, struggling to overcome an acute economic crisis, announced that they were withdrawing their support from the right-wing government then in power in Greece, which was fighting for its life against a revolutionary guerrilla movement. The immediate United States response was the Truman Doctrine. This in effect proclaimed an American protectorate over Greece and Turkey and announced that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." In Fleming's words:

> No pronouncement could have been more sweeping. Wherever a Communist rebellion developed the United States would suppress it. Wherever the Soviet Union attempted to push outward, at any point around its vast circumference, the United States would resist. The United States would become the world's anti-Communist, anti-Russian policeman. . . .[1]

. . . The need of the American oligarchy for a large and growing military machine is a logical corollary of its purpose to contain, compress, and eventually destroy the rival world socialist system.

We cannot leave this subject . . . without inquiring into the causes of capitalist hostility to the existence of a rival world socialist system. If, as some people seem to think, this hostility is based largely on irrational prejudices and fears, like the sedulously cultivated belief in Soviet aggressiveness, then there would seem to be at least a chance that in time more rational views might come to prevail. In that case, peaceful coexistence and disarmament could be looked upon not as propaganda slogans in the struggle between the two systems but as realizable goals. On the other hand, if the prejudices and fears are, as so often happens, simply masks for deep-rooted interests, then we would have to assess the outlook differently.

First, we must dispose of one very common argument purporting to prove that the spread of socialism is a mortal threat to the existence of the capitalist system. It is often said that capitalism cannot exist without foreign trade and that every advance of socialism means a constriction of capitalism's trading area. Hence, the argument continues, for the leading capitalist countries, even if they are not threatened by powerful internal socialist movements, the struggle against socialism is quite literally a struggle for survival. Put in this form, the reasoning from capitalist interests involves a *non sequitur*. It is true that capitalism is inconceivable without foreign trade, but it is not true that socialist countries are unwilling or unable to trade with capitalist countries. Hence the spread of socialism, taken by itself, does not imply any reduction of the trading area open to the capitalist countries. One can even go further. Bourgeois economists never tire of repeating that the more industrially developed a country

[1] Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, Volume 1, p. 446.

is, the greater its potential as a trading partner. Since underdeveloped countries industrialize more rapidly under socialism than under capitalism, the leading capitalist countries, on this argument, should welcome the spread of socialism in the underdeveloped parts of the capitalist world. That they do not but instead resist it tooth and nail must be explained on other grounds.

The problem is in reality much more complex and can only be fruitfully posed in quite different terms. Capitalist governments do not, in general, trade with each other. Most trade in the capitalist world is carried on by private enterprises, mainly by large corporations. What these corporations are interested in is not trade as such but profits: the reason they and the governments they control are opposed to the spread of socialism is not that it necessarily reduces their chances of importing or exporting (though of course it may), but that it does necessarily reduce their opportunities to profit from doing business with and in the newly socialized area. And when account is taken of the fact that for corporations in the leading capitalist countries, profit rates from doing business with and in the less developed and underdeveloped countries are generally higher than domestic profit rates, the reason for the vehemence of opposition to the spread of socialism in precisely those areas will be appreciated.

We advisedly use the general term "doing business with and in" rather than the more limited "buying from and selling to." The international relationships and interests of the typical giant corporation today are likely to be diverse and extremely complex, much more so than mere exporting or importing. There is perhaps no better way to make this clear than by summarizing the world-wide scope and character of what is unquestionably the leading United States "multinational corporation"—Standard Oil of New Jersey.[2] The facts and figures which follow are taken from official publications of the company.[3]

[2] The term "multinational corporation" seems to have originated with David E. Lilienthal, Director of the Tennessee Valley Authority under Roosevelt and of the Atomic Energy Commission under Truman, and now Chairman of the Development and Resources Corporation which is backed and controlled by the international banking house of Lazard Frères. A paper delivered by Lilienthal at Carnegie Institute of Technology in April 1960, and subsequently published by Development and Resources Corporation, bears the title "The Multinational Corporation." The usage was subsequently

In terms of dollar assets, Jersey Standard is the largest industrial corporation in the United States, the total at the end of 1962 amounting to $11,488 million. Aggregate revenues for the same year were $10,567 million and net income (profit) $841 million. It is only when these figures are broken down geographically, however, that the crucial importance of foreign operations becomes clear. As of the end of 1958, the percentage distribution of assets and profits by regions was as follows:

	Assets	Profits
United States and Canada	67	34
Latin America	20	39
Eastern Hemisphere	13	27
Total	100	100

While two thirds of Jersey's assets were located in North America, only one third of its profits came from that region. Or to put the point differently, Jersey's foreign investments were half as large as its domestic investments but its foreign profits were twice as large as its domestic profits. The indicated profit rate abroad is thus four times the domestic rate.

That Jersey's operations are truly world-wide can be gathered from the facts that in 1962 the company sold its products in more than a hundred countries and owned 50 percent or more of the stock in 275 subsidiaries in 52 countries. Summarizing by regions, we find that Jersey had 114 subsidiaries in the United States and Canada, 77 in Europe, 43 in Latin America, 14 in Asia, 9 in Africa, and 18 elsewhere.

The tremendous variety and scope of Jersey's foreign operations might lead one to suppose that over the years the company has been a large and consistent exporter of capital. Nothing could be further from the truth. Apart from a small initial export of capital many years ago, the expansion of Jersey's foreign assets has been financed from the profits of its foreign operations. Moreover, so great have been these foreign profits that after all

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taken up by *Business Week* in a special report, "Multinational Companies," in its issue of April 20, 1963.

[3] *Notice of Special Stockholders' Meeting* (October 7, 1959); *Form 10-K for the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 1962* (filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Section 13 of the Securities Act of 1934); and 1962 *Annual Report.*

foreign expansion needs have been taken care of, there have still been huge sums left over for remittance to the parent company in the United States. . . . [As already noted] total profits were $841 million. Of this sum, $538 million were paid out as dividends to stockholders, the vast majority of whom are residents of the United States. The remaining $303 million were added to the company's investments, at home and abroad. Elsewhere in the same Annual Report that records these figures we learn that profits from operations in the United States in 1962 were $309 million. This figure, it will be seen, is $229 million less than the amount of dividends paid. In other words, approximately 40 percent of dividends paid to stockholders plus whatever net investment was made in the United States during the year were financed from the profits of foreign operations. In a word: Standard Oil of New Jersey is a very large and consistent *importer* of capital. . . .

A big change took place during the next decade and a half. To quote *Business Week,* "In industry after industry, U.S. companies found that their overseas earnings were soaring, and that their return on investment abroad was frequently much higher than in the U.S. As earnings abroad began to rise, profit margins from domestic operations started to shrink. . . . This is the combination that forced development of the multinational company."[4] As a result, of course, foreign direct investments of American corporations shot up—from $7.2 billion in 1946 to $40.6 billion in 1963, a more than fivefold increase in the years since the Second World War.[5] Parallel to this growth in foreign investments has gone an increase in the sales and profits of foreign branches and subsidiaries. In manufacturing (excluding petroleum and mining), sales of such affiliates amounted to $18.3 billion in 1957 (the first year for which figures are available) and to $28.1 billion in 1962, an increase of 54 percent in six years.[6]

Some idea of the growing relative importance of these foreign operations of American corporations may be gathered from Table 1, which presents data on the sales of foreign manufactur-

[4] "Multinational Companies," *Business Week,* April 20, 1963.
[5] *Survey of Current Business,* August 1964, p. 10.
[6] Fred Cutler and Samuel Pizer, "Foreign Operations of U.S. Industry: Capital Spending, Sales, and Financing," *Survey of Current Business,* October 1963, p. 19.

ing affiliates, total domestic manufacturing sales and nonagricultural merchandise exports.

It would of course be preferable to compare the foreign and domestic sales and exports of those corporations which have foreign branches or subsidiaries; and it would be still better if we could include the profits of these corporations from foreign and domestic operations respectively. If such data were available, we could form a very clear picture of the degree of involvement of the United States giant corporations in foreign activities. But even the figures presented in Table 1 bear eloquent testimony to the rapid growth of that involvement. In the six years beginning with 1957, the sales of foreign affiliates grew by 54 percent, while total domestic manufacturing sales expanded only 17 percent and nonagricultural exports hardly changed at all.

So much for the record of recent years. If we look ahead, we find that American corporate business, far from regarding its expansion abroad as having come to an end, is relying heavily for its future prosperity on the continued penetration of other countries' economies. "America as the 'land of opportunity' is beginning to lose that title in the eyes of many U.S. businessmen," says

Table 1

Growth of Foreign and Domestic Manufacturing Sales and Merchandise Exports, 1957–1962 (Billions of Dollars)

	Sales of foreign manufacturing affiliates	Total domestic manufacturing sales	Merchandise exports (excluding foodstuffs)
1957	18.3	341	16.8
1958	*n.a.*	314	13.8
1959	21.1	356	13.7
1960	23.6	365	16.6
1961	25.6	368	16.9
1962	28.1	400	17.3

n.a. = not available
Sources: Foreign sales, Fred Cutler and Samuel Pizer, "Foreign Operations of U.S. Industry," *Survey of Current Business*, October 1963; domestic sales and exports, *Economic Indicators*, current issues.

a Special Report in *U.S. News & World Report.*[7] And the Report goes on to tell why:

> These businessmen increasingly are deciding that markets abroad —not those in this country—offer the biggest potential for future growth. The feeling grows that the U.S. market, while huge, is relatively "saturated."
>
> It is overseas that businessmen see the big, untapped market with hundreds of millions of customers wanting—and increasingly able to buy—all kinds of products and services.
>
> To go after this market, U.S. firms are building and expanding factories all around the world. Since 1958, more than 2,100 American companies have started new operations in Western Europe alone. . . .
>
> All types of businesses—from autos to baby foods—predict a glowing future for markets outside the U.S.
>
> Says L. E. Spencer, president of Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company of Canada: "Foreign markets will expand several times as fast as North American markets over the next 10 years."
>
> From C. C. Smith, vice president of International Business Machines' World Trade Corporation: "The rate of increase in our foreign business is greater than in the U.S. in every major product category. In time, we expect volume to overtake that in the U.S."
>
> Listen to the comment by an official of Colgate-Palmolive Company: "You're in a saturated market here in the U.S., where new products are the only answer to growth. Abroad there are millions of people each year who reach the stage in their cultural, social and economic development where they buy soap, toothpaste, other things we sell."
>
> This flat prediction is made by Fred J. Borch, president of General Electric Corporation: "Regardless of economic or political ups and downs, the most rapidly expanding markets will be abroad in the next 25 years."
>
> Against that background, the survey of U.S. firms abroad turned up these major findings—
>
> 1. Foreign sales of U.S. companies are growing much faster than sales of the same companies in this country. Often, the percentage gains are three or four times as great.

[7] "For New Opportunities: Now, the Word Is 'Go Abroad,'" *U.S. News & World Report*, June 1, 1964. In order to gather material for this report, "members of the International Staff of *U.S. News & World Report* talked with scores of U.S. firms abroad. Added material was gathered from corporations in the U.S. heavily engaged in the foreign field."

2. Profit rates abroad generally are higher than those in similar activities in the U.S. Many firms report a percentage return "twice as high abroad as in America." Most cite lower wage costs overseas—and less competition.
3. Foreign markets usually can best be tapped by an on-the-scene operation, rather than by exporting from the U.S. A plant abroad can avoid tariff and other trade barriers erected against exports from this country. . . .

It thus appears both from the record of the past and from the plans and hopes for the future that American corporate business has irrevocably embarked on the road long since pioneered by Standard Oil. Standard is still the model of a multinational corporation, but it is no longer an exception. It simply shows us in the most developed form what the other giants either already are or are in the process of becoming.

As it happens, the recent history of Standard Oil of New Jersey also supplies us with a textbook example of why multinational corporations are profoundly hostile to the spread of socialism. Before the Cuban Revolution, Jersey was heavily involved in Cuba in several ways. It owned refining facilities on the island and operated an extensive distribution system, involving altogether properties valued at $62,269,000.[8] In addition, Jersey's Cuban subsidiary bought its crude from Creole Petroleum, Jersey's Venezuelan subsidiary, at the high prices maintained by the international oil cartel. The company therefore reaped profits in two countries and on three separate operations—sale of crude, refining of crude, and sale of finished products. As a result of the Revolution, the company's properties in Cuba were nationalized without compensation, and Creole lost its Cuban market. More than $60 million in assets and all three sources of current profit were lost in one blow—and without in any way involving exports from or imports to the United States.

It might be argued that if Jersey and the United States government had pursued different policies toward Cuba, the revolutionary regime would have been glad to continue buying oil from Venezuela, which after all is the nearest and most rational source of supply. This is no doubt true—but with a big proviso. The revolutionary regime would have been glad to continue buying oil from Venezuela, but it would not have been glad to

[8] Standard and Poor, *Standard Corporate Descriptions,* July 24, 1961.

continue paying prices and meeting terms of payment dictated by Standard Oil. And since it could turn to the Soviet Union as an alternative source of supply, it was no longer obliged to go on submitting to the cartel's terms. Hence to remain in the Cuban market, Jersey would at the least have had to cut its prices and offer better credit terms. This not only would have meant less profits on sales to Cuba but would have threatened the whole structure of cartel prices. Jersey and Washington decided instead to make war on the Cuban Revolution.

That what is at stake in the conflict between the United States and Cuba is not trade between the two countries is confirmed by Cuba's relations with other capitalist countries. Long after the socialization of the Cuban economy, the Havana government was vigorously promoting its trade with Britain, France, Spain, Canada, Japan—in short, with any country willing and able to do business with Cuba. It is true, of course, that Cuba's capacity to export and import has been seriously curtailed by the disorganization and other difficulties of the early years of the change-over to socialism, but there seems to be no reason to doubt the Cubans' own contention that in a few years the island will be a much better trading partner than it was under the old neo-colonial regime. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the United States could capture a major share of the Cuban trade if the blockade were called off and normal relations re-established between the two countries.

But this is not what really interests the giant multinational corporations which dominate American policy. What they want is *monopolistic control* over foreign sources of supply and foreign markets, enabling them to buy and sell on specially privileged terms, to shift orders from one subsidiary to another, to favor this country or that depending on which has the most advantageous tax, labor, and other policies—in a word, they want to do business on their own terms and wherever they choose. And for this what they need is not trading partners but "allies" and clients willing to adjust their laws and policies to the requirements of American Big Business.

Against this background, one can see that Cuba's crime was to assert, in deeds as well as in words, her sovereign right to dispose over her own resources in the interests of her own people.

This involved curtailing and, in the struggle which ensued, eventually abrogating the rights and privileges which the giant multinational corporations had previously enjoyed in Cuba. It was because of this and not because of a loss of trade, still less because of any irrational fears or prejudices, that the corporations and their government in Washington reacted so violently to the Cuban Revolution.

It might perhaps be thought that since Cuba is a small country, the violence of the reaction was out of all proportion to the damage suffered. But this would be to miss the main point. What makes Cuba so important is precisely that she is so small, plus the fact that she is located so close to the United States. If Cuba can defect from the "free world" and join the socialist camp with impunity, then any country can do so. And if Cuba prospers under the new setup, all the other underdeveloped and exploited countries of the world will be tempted to follow her example. The stake in Cuba is thus not simply the exploitability of one small country but the very existence of the "free world" itself, that is to say, of the whole system of exploitation.

It is this fact that has dictated the Cuban policy of the United States. The strategy has been to damage and cripple the Cuban economy in every possible way, with a threefold objective. First, it is hoped that the Cuban people will sooner or later become disillusioned with their revolutionary leadership, thus setting the stage for a successful counter-revolution. Second, the peoples of the underdeveloped countries are to be taught that revolution does not pay. And third, the burden of supporting the Cuban economy thrown on the rest of the socialist camp, and especially on the Soviet Union as its economically most developed member, is to be maximized so that these other socialist countries may be induced to use their influence to restrain any new revolutions which might place further burdens on their already overstrained economies.

This is of course not the only way the "free world" is being defended. The United States failed to understand the nature of the revolution which overthrew the Batista regime in Cuba until it was too late to keep the revolutionaries from consolidating their power. Every precaution is being taken to see that the same mistake is not made again. All revolutionaries are automatically

suspect; no regime is too reactionary to merit all-out United States backing.

Partly, this backing takes the form of so-called economic aid—in reality handouts to corrupt oligarchies designed to insure their loyalty to Washington rather than to the interests of their own countries.[9] And partly it takes the form of military aid, which is predominantly of two types.

First, there is direct participation by United States armed forces on the territory of the client state: stationing of troops in bases controlled by the United States (there are some 275 major base complexes and 1,400 bases either occupied by or prepared for American forces); "emergency" deployment of troops anywhere on the host country's national territory that the two governments may decide (Lebanon in the summer of 1958, Thailand in the spring of 1962, the Dominican Republic in the spring of 1965); and various kinds of advisory and training missions accredited to the armed forces of the clients (in 1957, a total of forty Army, Navy, and Air Force missions were in Latin America alone, in every country except Mexico). As South Vietnam shows, training missions can be quickly and almost imperceptibly transformed into counter-revolutionary combat forces.

The second form of military aid is the provision of material and financial support for the armed forces of the client states. While the dozens of military assistance pacts which the United States has signed with underdeveloped countries around the world are ostensibly designed to meet the "threat" of aggression from the Soviet Union or China, no serious military planner imagines that this is the real purpose. Such a threat, if it really existed, could be countered only by the United States itself, and an attempt to coordinate military strategy with a large number of feeble allies would be a source of weakness rather than strength.

The purpose of United States military aid to underdeveloped

[9] "A lot of the criticism of foreign aid," according to D. A. Fitzgerald, a high official in the succession of United States government agencies in charge of foreign aid from 1948 to 1961, "is because the critic thought the objective was to get economic growth, and this wasn't the objective at all.... It depends on what the major purpose is, and half the time the major purpose is to meet a short-term political crisis—and economic development, if any, is only an incidental result." Interview in *U.S. News & World Report*, February 25, 1963, pp. 49, 50.

countries is to keep them in the American empire if they are already there and to bring them in if they are not—and in any case to insure that there are no further defections from the "free world." The consequences for the recipient countries are tragic. "What we are doing," said the Colombian statesman Eduardo Santos, "is building up armies which weigh nothing in the international scale but which are juggernauts for the internal life of each country. Each country is being occupied by its own army."[10] And the same point is made and heavily underlined in a remarkable study of relations between the United States and Pakistan published by a group of Pakistani students in London:

> In the long run, the worst aspect of military aid lies in the complete change it produces in the balance of social and political forces in favor of conservatism and established vested interests. The dragon seeds sown by military aid have produced a fearful crop of military officers, with their social roots in the most conservative sections of our society, who have learnt to sit in judgment on our people. It is an overwhelming force without any countervailing force to hold it in check.[11]

This world-wide spawning of little military machines loyal to Washington does not in any way reduce the need for a big military machine in the United States itself. As the tide of revolutionary protest rises in the exploited countries of the "free world," it is only by increasingly direct and massive intervention by American armed forces that the old order can be held together a while longer.

The threat to the [United States] empire comes from revolutionary movements which, like the American Revolution two hundred years ago, are sparked by a deep-seated yearning for national independence and are fueled by an increasingly urgent need for economic development, which experience is proving cannot be achieved by underdeveloped countries today except on the basis of public enterprise and comprehensive planning—in short, only if their nationalist revolutions are also socialist revolutions.

[10] Quoted by Edwin C. Lieuwen, *Arms and Politics in Latin America,* New York, 1960, pp. 237–238.

[11] "The Burden of U.S. Aid," *Pakistan Today,* New Series, No. 1, Autumn 1961.

part three

American Interventionism: Some Recent Cases

Making the world safe for American capitalism can lead to some grim and bloody actions of a kind that violate our own professed ideals about life, liberty, national independence, and democracy. The readings by John Gerassi, James Petras, and Richard Morrock give specific detailed accounts of American imperialism in action. Despite many differences in historical particulars, the interventions in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam reveal unhappy parallels. In each instance, the indigenous social order was characterized by marked privileges for the few and widespread exploitation of, and social injustice for, the many. In all three countries movements toward popular and fundamental change threatened the social and economic status quo: in Guatemala with the reform-minded democratically elected Arbenz government, in the Dominican Republic with a popular Constitutionalist rebellion centering around Santo Domingo, and in Vietnam with a protracted national war of liberation. In all three instances, indirectly in the first case and openly in the latter two, the United States intervened with force and violence on the side of the privileged interests in attempts to reinstitute the *status quo ante.*

The reasons given to justify American intervention in these and most other instances are familiar: relentless, somewhat ubiquitous communist aggressors—now with their headquarters in Moscow, now in Peking, now in Hanoi, now in Havana, etc.—were spreading their tentacles over areas that

Western policy makers call, in all apparent seriousness, the "Free World." America and other freedom-loving nations of this Free World, such as Greece, Portugual, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, etc., would not remain secure unless we contained these incursions. Should we concede any area to social revolutionary change, we would be faced with a still more persistent aggressor whose appetite is only whetted by concessions and victories, as was true of Hitler after Munich. The fall of one nation to communism would only set off a chain reaction of communist rebellions, and other nations would topple "like a row of dominos." In the selection from his *Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal*, Howard Zinn gives critical attention to the fallacies and simplicities of the Munich analogy, the domino theory, and to the policy of containment as applied in Southeast Asia.

In the final selection, Noam Chomsky brings us to what must become the logical outcome of repressive intervention: genocide. "It is important to understand that the massacre of the rural population of Vietnam and their forced evacuation is not an accidental by-product of the war. Rather it is of the very essence of American strategy," Chomsky writes. He cites the latest development in counter-insurgency wars: the use of massive saturation bombing of civilian populations in areas controlled by popular liberation forces, as in Laos, the most heavily bombed country in the world. Since the original publication of his article, much of Cambodia has been subjected by the Nixon administration to the same kind of aerial devastation.

7

Destroying a Social Democracy: The Case of Guatemala

John Gerassi

Guatemala has had few dictators—but their reigns have been long. From 1838, when the short-lived United Provinces of Central America disintegrated, to 1865, the boss was an Indian illiterate *caudillo* named Rafael Carrera, who was very Catholic (and Conservative), signed Latin America's first concordat with the Vatican, intervened in neighboring lands to establish Conservative regimes there, and kept Indians in peonage to the big Creole landowners because "to be against private property is to be against God."

His successor, Liberal Justo Rufino Barrios, an anticlerical, proscribed religious processions, forbade the wearing of clerical habits, confiscated Church property, made civil marriage obligatory, and kept the Indians in peonage to big landowners (now including some German immigrants) because the latter were whiter and "Indians think like priests—kneeling."

From 1898 to 1920, Manuel Estrada Cabrera, who was reelected "unanimously" just about every other month, developed a secret police to track down critics, and kept Indians in peonage by allowing the United Fruit Company, to which he granted huge concessions, to use private armies as "pacifiers." Then, from 1931 to 1944, the next dictator, Jorge Ubico, altered the pattern.

Just as ruthless, bloody, and corrupt as his predecessors,

From John Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America,* Revised Edition, New York, Collier-Macmillan, 1965, pp. 180–186.

Ubico was also intelligent. Thus, he managed to refill the treasury coffers, balance budgets, restore Guatemala's international credit, and build more roads and hospitals than all his predecessors combined. By decree, he theoretically ended peonage; he posed as the Indians' friend. But in practice he let the landowners and United Fruit continue as they always had. Ubico also pilfered more funds than his predecessors, and discovered more plots against him, hence executed more. He mastered the art of handling men, as the following tale by Guatemalan writer Jorge García Granados illustrates:

> In 1934, he [Ubico] uncovered a conspiracy against him. . . . Seventeen men were seized, given a farcical trial in which they were not even permitted defense attorneys, and sentenced to be shot. Although I had no part in the conspiracy, I wrote Ubico a strong letter charging that the trial was a mockery of the law, and urging him to pardon the condemned.
>
> Ubico replied by sending a squad of police to arrest me in my home, take me to the place of execution, and force me to be an eyewitness to the shooting of the seventeen. Then I was thrown into prison and held in solitary confinement for months, not even permitted to receive news from my family.

Ubico was considered one of our good friends in Central America, and we openly supported him. Nevertheless, he was overthrown by a revolution in 1944. Free elections were called, and in 1945 Juan José Arévalo came to power.

Arévalo and his legally elected successor, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (1950–1954), began what is now commonly called the Social Revolution. To Latin Americans everywhere, they were Social Reformers and Nationalists. To our State Department and press, they were Communists and Russian agents "who led the people like sheep." That at least this last point was false has been proved by a United States social scientist[1] who based his report on a thorough research project that included a vast number of interviews. His conclusions:

> It has been commented that "these people were being led like sheep"; in the writer's opinion, this is not supported. It is clear that the population interviewed was in general interested in some

[1] Stokes Newbold, with the collaboration of June and Manning Nash, *A Study of Receptivity to Communism in Rural Guatemala.*

> phase of the past [Arbenz] government's activities. . . . It may be said that these people were being led in that they did what the Communists wanted; on the other hand, they were doing things which they too wished to do. The Communists were successful in identifying their goals with those of certain portions of the rural population; this can be laid to the cleverness of the Communists, but not necessarily to the "sheep-like" qualities of the population.

No serious historian or sociologist questions the fact that Guatemala needed social change: before Arévalo the right of labor, whether in factories or in fields, including United Fruit plantations, had never been recognized; unions, civil liberties, freedom of speech and press were outlawed; foreign interests had been sacred, their privileges were monopolistic and their tax concessions beyond all considerations of fairness; counting each foreign corporation as a person, 98 percent of Guatemala's cultivated land was owned by exactly 142 people; only one-third of schoolchildren could attend classes—there weren't any more schools—and only 10 percent did.

Arévalo and Arbenz changed these conditions. As long as they pressed forward for education reforms, no one grumbled too much. Free speech and press were established. Then unions were recognized and legalized, and many passed into Leftist control. Perhaps some were Communist; after all, according to our Senate Investigating Subcommittee, there were 1,000 Communists in Guatemala, and these 1,000 must have been doing something.

On June 17, 1952, Arbenz proclaimed a wide-sweeping program (Decree 900) of land reform. It called for the expropriation and redistribution of uncultivated or fallow lands above a basic acreage, specifically exempted all intensively cultivated lands (only 5 percent of over-1,000 hectare farms were then under cultivation), ordered all absentee-owned property to be redistributed, offered compensation in twenty-year bonds at 3 percent interest assessed according to the declared tax value. Even our own agronomists approved. On page 179 of *Latin American Issues,* published by the Twentieth Century Fund, one can read: "For all the furor it produced, Decree 900, which had its roots in the constitution of 1945, is a remarkably mild and a fairly sound piece of legislation."

But, since much of Guatemala's plantation land (including 400,000 acres not under cultivation) belonged to the United Fruit Company, we naturally became concerned. And when Arbenz gave out the company's land to 180,000 peasants, we began seeing Red.

"The Communists have been able to move in easily," agreed at the time the late, staunchly anti-Communist Columbia University teacher Jésus de Galíndez. But, he added, "social-economic reform is absolutely necessary in Guatemala. To condemn it is to help Communism."

We condemned it just the same. Having refused to sell arms to Guatemala since 1948, we intercepted and confiscated a shipment from Switzerland—a fact reported in Latin America by no United States agency, only by the British service Reuters.[2] Then, in 1954, we got the OAS to convene its foreign ministers in Caracas (home of Dictator Pérez Jiménez). Secretary of State John Foster Dulles showed up just long enough to bulldoze a declaration censuring Guatemala, and sped home.

Fortified with this declaration, we went to work getting rid of Arbenz. We found another Guatemalan colonel, Carlos Castillo Armas (a graduate of the United States Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas), fed him arms (including six F-47's piloted by US "volunteers") and dollars to set up a rebel force in Honduras and Nicaragua (home of Dictator Anastasio Somoza), and helped him overthrow Arbenz. Armas thereupon became a ruthless dictator, closed down opposition newspapers (which Arbenz had never done), smashed student rallies, tortured and murdered his critics, gave back Arbenz-expropriated lands, allowed plantation owners to cut down wages 30 percent, and awarded friends $1,000,000 a year through legal *confidenciales*, and millions more through other channels.[3]

Armas was assassinated in 1957, and elections were scheduled. The moderates won, so the military immediately annulled the election and scheduled a new one. This time the army made

[2] Guatemala finally got some arms from Czechoslovakia.

[3] One friend and beneficiary was Thomas J. Dodd, ex-Representative, now Senator from Connecticut, who was hired to represent (i.e., lobby for) Guatemala in the United States for $50,000 a year—the same Senator Dodd who in 1962 almost (he refused because he was "too busy") led the Senate investigation on sugar lobbies.

sure of the outcome: conservative General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes became President early in 1958. Husky, informal, and good-natured in appearance, Ydígoras was thereupon billed as a great democrat—in the United States (thanks mainly to such agile PR men as former Secretary of Interior Oscar Littleton Chapman).

But in Guatemala, as everywhere else in Latin America, he was known for what he was: a dictator who is perhaps not so bloody as the average Latin American strong man but who nevertheless ruled with hoods, goons, and his United States-equipped army. There was little freedom of the press in Guatemala, and persistent critics were inevitably silenced or taught a painful lesson. No land reform has been attempted since Arbenz' fall, nor was any tried under Ydígoras, since the land is mostly owned by our companies or Ydígoras' pals. When he took over Guatemala, the government still owned 88 coffee *fincas;* only a handful remain today. Ydígoras, whose official, *legal* pay was $1,094,000 a year, had been giving the *fincas* away or selling them cheaply to friends and political partners. For example, one plantation, which made more than $200,000 a year, went to movie-maker Ramiro Samayoa, a personal friend of Ydígoras. Meanwhile, of course, no serious attempt was undertaken to reduce illiteracy, disease, or poverty.

Unfortunately, the United States is held partly responsible for these conditions. The reason is that Ydígoras and our State Department were so tightly linked that most Latin Americans were convinced that the Guatemalan government did not make a single move without first being so ordered by the United States. Unfortunately, there were some facts to back up this contention.

When Guatemala was rocked by revolt in November, 1960—a revolt of Guatemalan conservative army officers against Ydígoras—it wired Washington (via United Fruit-owned Tropical Radio) a series of badly coded messages, which were monitored by a whole flock of Latin American radio operators (including hams as far down as Colombia). The messages were easily decoded and then made public. Message 1,788, sent on November 14th, at 12:50 P.M., ordered the Guatemalan United States ambassador to get OAS help, but ended with this now famous sentence: "Get in touch immediately with [then Assistant Secretary

of State for Inter-American Affairs] Thomas Mann to coordinate your action." Eight hours later, Cable 1,793 told the ambassador to apply for our naval and air support, concluding, "Convenient coordinate immediately with State Department."

Is Guatemala so "sold out" to the United States, asked Latin Americans, that even in a moment of crisis—a revolution—it must first get clearance for its acts from the United States? For their answer, Latin Americans unfortunately looked at the results: without waiting for OAS action, the United States dispatched warships to the Guatemalan coast. The revolution was doomed. Latin Americans asked: Was the payoff the Retalhuleu Base? (On January 10, 1961, the *New York Times* described this base as a training center for Cuban exiles and as a launching pad for their unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba; the Kennedy Administration then admitted it, but Ydígoras denied it to the day he was overthrown.)

Early in 1962, it seemed as if Ydígoras were through. Students, teachers, even Ydígoras-controlled unions were demanding his resignation. There were riots every single day for a month, and Guatemala refused to issue any entrance visas. Then, suddenly, came absolute silence. Not one protest, not one rally, not one public complaint was reported. When I arrived a few days later, the country was completely calm. I asked my contacts to explain. "We have never seen such efficient lightning-fast repressions," they told me, "and we know for certain that the whole government apparatus was taken over by the CIA." I would have doubted such an explanation much more had my contacts in Guatemala, as in all Central America, not been the Christian Democrats. Pro-United States and anti-Castro (though pro-reforms), they stood only to lose from such a tale. True or not, the country had undoubtedly been cowed into total passivity by the time I arrived. When Ydígoras was finally tossed out of office, the tossers, of course, were army officers from the extreme Right. After that the atmosphere had the same quiet thickness common to Nicaragua or Paraguay.

Nevertheless, Guatemala impressed me as one of the most charming countries on this continent. Its people are hospitable, its sights overpoweringly attractive, its plazas or main squares picturesque, its buildings old and poor but enchanting. True, half

of Guatemala City's 400,000 inhabitants live in swampside slums, and true, many peasants live in mud huts without sanitation while the huge master's home that overlooks them could easily house all the peon families in luxury and still leave a dozen-room wing for the owner. Yet, wherever one travels in Guatemala one finds smiles, even on poverty—perhaps not smiles of happiness but certainly smiles of hospitality.

In the hazardous mountainous passes on the western side of Lake Atitlán, which is one of the continent's real marvels, Indians would rush up to us every time we stopped our jeep—not to beg for money, as we were warned, but to help push, thinking we were stuck (the zigzag climb on mud, dirt, or rocks is at sixty degrees, with precipices for shoulders). Around the lake itself, where each town's women wear identically colored bright garments and wave to all newcomers, in the mountain paths from Totonicapán to Huehuetenango or in the jungle trails (called roads) behind Copán; in fact anywhere we journeyed in our vista-packed 2,000-mile trip through Guatemala the only discourteous, inhospitable individual we met was a United States engineer named La Rue who ordered his armed private cops to stop anyone from using a road he had built (from Tres Encuentros to San Cristóbal) because the United States company he worked for had not been paid by the government.

So beautiful, so friendly, so enchanting is Guatemala that it seems doubly a crime that it is run so unjustly for the benefit of so few.[4]

[4] [In recent years, right-wing paramilitary squads have undertaken a protracted campaign of terror in Guatemala. In 1968, the *New York Times* estimated the total number of assassinations as being anywhere from 2,000 to 4,000. Even the Guatemalan bishops felt impelled to protest publicly against the succession of kidnappings, torturings, mutilations, and murders by government forces. See *New York Times*, May 11, 1967 and January 22, 1968.—Ed.]

8

The Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration

James Petras

[Editor's note: During the last decade, at least eight democratically elected governments in Latin America have been overthrown by military coups. In each instance, the usurping generals and their armies long had been the beneficiaries of American aid. In the Dominican Republic, in September 1963, the democratically elected President, Juan Bosch, considered by many American observers to be representative of the noncommunist left in Latin America, was overthrown in a military coup. Less than a year before, Bosch had been the winner of the first free election held in the republic in forty years. The military regime that took his place won the firm support of the Lyndon Johnson administration in Washington but not the firm support of the Dominican people. In the following April there began a popular uprising of trade unionists, workers, students, professionals, and others led by younger officers and dissident troops within that portion of the military still sympathetic to Bosch (and soon to become known as the "Constitutionalists").

Within a few days, there seemed good reason to believe that the Constitutionalists' forces had widespread popular backing and would soon win a decisive victory. But, as Philip Geyelin wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* (June 25, 1965), "... from the very outset of the upheaval there was a concerted U.S. Government effort, if not actually a formal decision, to checkmate the rebel movement by whatever means and whatever cost." On the fourth day of the rebellion large contingents of United States marines were sent to Santo Domingo in support of the military junta. Systematic en-

From *Liberation*, September 1966, pp. 5–10, 38–39.

circlement and slaughter of popular forces ensued. Regular units within the Dominican forces that had cast in their lot with the Constitutionalists or had remained noncommittal soon jumped to the side of the military junta. Petras describes these occurrences and the events that followed once "peace" was restored.]

Santo Domingo, with its bullet scarred buildings, its run-down commercial area, and its daylight streets full of unemployed men and broken-down wooden houses, appears like a southern Negro shantytown superimposed on Harlem. The difference is in the slogans on the walls: "FUERA GENOCIDAS," "FUERA AGRESORES YANQUIS." The houses destroyed by U.S. mortars still lie in ruins; most restaurant windows are still boarded up. Much of the destruction was wrought by the battle of June 15–16 (1965), when U.S. artillery and mobile units including mounted machine guns tried to carry out the U.S. generals' boast that the Revolutionaries' sector could be taken in two hours. After three nights and two days of fighting the U.S. marines had advanced only 2 blocks. The ravages are still present, but many Dominican freedom fighters are not. In an interview with the author (August 25, 1966) former President Juan Bosch estimated that between three and four thousand Dominicans had been killed after the U.S. intervention.

Today trade union leaders do not venture out of doors without carrying a pistol as protection against likely attacks while the Balaguer government is trying to pass restrictive legislation to totally disarm the populace. Today anyone who was a Constitutionalist militant is hiding the fact, for it is something worse than suspect—it can be grounds for murder. After 8 P.M. the streets are empty; the "peace and tranquility" is based on fear of the continued terror by political gangsters who now have been revived and strengthened. Before dawn hundreds of unemployed line up outside the headquarters of the *Partido Reformista* (Balaguer's organization) and around government offices, waiting for nonexistent jobs. Typical of the style of the new government is the Red Cross which has its posters plastered on all the buildings boasting of its service to "all the community." During the Revolution when this author with a committee of doctors called the Red Cross trying to send urgently needed plasma to the Constitutionalists, they replied that they had to consult the State Department

—and then refused to transmit the plasma to that side of the "community." A U.S. businessman told me that I should come here and get rich, especially now with all the new "projects" getting under way with no taxes, cheap labor ($1 to $2 a day): "In the next 5 years this is the best country in Latin America to make a fortune in."

The program of the Balaguer government gives every indication of being a businessman's dream. The proposed *Ley de Austeridad* would lower salaries of public employees, freeze the wages of the working class and prohibit strikes for at least one year—while placing no limits on profits. Prices of staple foods continue to soar. According to *Listin Diario,* August 22, 1966, official prices are regular rice 14 cents a pound, native beans 16 cents. Trade unionists and workers claimed prices were much higher—beans 24 cents, "poor" meat 60 cents, potatoes 8 cents a pound. The lowering of real wages and the increase in prices reverses the central planks of the Balaguer campaign: lower prices and increased salaries.

The *Ley de Tregua Politica* would restrict party activities by not allowing public meetings except during the three months preceding the next election. Marches, assemblies, and public demonstrations in general would be prohibited. This would further atomize and demoralize the populace, cripple the parties of the opposition and allow the Balaguer-controlled Congress to pass any further anti-popular legislation without opposition—hence the term by which Balaguer's government is frequently referred to, the "legal dictatorship." On August 20 Balaguer signed a law that dissolves the state-owned Dominican Sugar Corporation (CAD) and makes the continuance of state ownership conditional on profitability. Under this law the enterprises could be turned over to private hands in five years. The Balaguer appointee on the new Consejo Estatal del Azucar, Gaitan Boucher, was a top executive of the U.S.-owned South Puerto Rico Sugar Company. . . .

Balaguer has confirmed in their positions all the Trujillista military officers whom the U.S. had rearmed and reorganized. The February 27 Campamento (the Constitutionalist garrison) is being totally dismantled, its officers being sent to study abroad or discharged and intimidated. Leading Constitutionalists who

have been discharged from the army include Quiroz Perez, Pericles Peralta Bueno, Lencion Silverio, Polanco Alegria, Marino Almanzar, Gonzalez y Gonzalez, Marte Hernandez, Rodriguez Garcia and Major Calderon Cepeda. In addition, G-2 Office of the Military Intelligence Service has sent invitations to the remaining Constitutionalist officers and soldiers to visit their office where they are subject to thinly veiled threats. (*El LJ4,* August 20, 1966, organ of the Movimiento Revolucionario 14 de Junio.) All efforts have been directed toward purging any possible dissident political force and creating a military completely loyal to the United States and to Balaguer.

In line with government policy a considerable number of militant workers have been discharged by private and state enterprises: 695 workers from Consuelo Sugar central, 2,000 workers from public works, 624 from the San Cristobal works, 45 workers, including the trade union leadership, from the Dominican Cotton Consortium, etc.

The political arrest and selective terrorism of Constitutional leaders practiced under the Provisional Government of Garcia Godoy continue unabated. A few days before my arrival in late August, Ramon Emilio Mejia Pichirilo, a Constitutionalist Comandante, and Juan Bisonó Mera, an ex-Constitutionalist official in Villa Bisonó, were assassinated. Balaguer's "investigations," like those of Garcia Godoy, never discovered the murderers.

Other recent "unsolved" killings include a policeman of Constitutionalist sympathy, Anastasio Sosa, and Guillermo Pelaez (June 14th leader) and some fourteen persons in the month of August alone. Numerous arrests of Constitutionalist leaders continued to take place in Puerto Plata, Barahona, El Leibo, and the Capital. Even the middle-of-the-road weekly *Ahora* commented sarcastically on the attitude of the government toward the continuing terrorism: "nothing happens, because the authorities, including the First Executive of the nation, reduce their expressions to the traditional and inefficient 'investigations' that have always occurred." (*Ahora,* August 29, p. 66.) The reference to the "always occurred" underlies the continuity of the Balaguer regime with his earlier Presidency under Trujillo.

The restoration of the old order was the primary strategy of

the U.S. invasion. The policies of Balaguer and of the military—their political gangsterism—are the fruits of the U.S. intervention. The police state legislation, the anti-working class measures and the totalitarian agencies and methods now in force are approved and to a large degree drawn up by U.S. advisors who are found in the offices of every major ministry on the policy-making level, from Financial and Commerical to Military Affairs.

A discussion of politics in the Dominican Republic today must be seen in terms of three phases: (1) The revolution of April 1965; (2) the U.S. military intervention and its aftermath; (3) the complex and continuing *process* of restoration of the old ruling classes in a permanently explosive socio-political milieu.

The physical presence of U.S. force was the prime instrument for the resurgence of Trujillismo both militarily and politically. The elections were held in a context where 70 per cent of the population (rural) was under military occupation and only one candidate was actually permitted access to the voters. The results of the election proper were determined by the results of the first days of the revolution and of the U.S. military occupation.

The April revolution began when a group of military officers led by Captain Manuel Pena Tavera of the February 27 campamento revolted against the corruption of military personnel and sought popular support. The initial call of the rebel military was for a military junta which would rule for three months and then would permit free elections. The military did not "arm the people." About 100 or so civilians received arms from the military; the arming of 6,000 civilians was the result of *popular* assaults on armories, military stockades and government buildings. As in all *popular* revolutions the people armed themselves. It was this fact of armed popular power which, together with the defeat of the pro-U.S. totalitarian military forces of Wessin y Wessin, caused Johnson to send in the marines. The revolution began as an overwhelmingly urban mass movement involving the *urban* unemployed, the industrial workers, artisans, the self-employed, the lower-level employees and the professionals. The top leadership was primarily professionals from the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD); the "comando" or command units were

made up and led by Catholic trade unionists (CASC) and June 14th militants in addition to PRD militants. The U.S. military force attacked and encircled the revolutionary forces, *confining them to the city and preventing the effective mobilization of the countryside.* The U.S. broke an agreement that it made with the Constitutionalists, under the pretense that the U.S. troops were establishing a zone of two blocks on either side of the U.S. embassy to allow for the safe evacuation of U.S. citizens. Once the U.S. troops moved into the area they immediately extended the "passageway" into a noose around the Constitutionalist-held city. The trust placed in agreements with U.S. political military forces indicated the predominance of the Boschists.

As a consequence, the countryside was under American political-military control from at least the middle of May 1965, preventing the élan and solidarity of the popular forces in Santo Domingo from spreading throughout the country. The experience of a people's army defeating the tyrannical and parasitic forces of the ruling class, the program of popular reform, the arms and organization with which to confront the U.S. marines—all these were absent from the countryside. Apart from the many areas where outright fraud was committed, Balaguer's greatest voting strength generally was found in those areas which the U.S. marines cut off from contact with the revolutionary forces, the areas isolated and under U.S. and Dominican military control. *Hence the urban-rural split in the vote coincided with the origins of the Revolution and the geo-military positions after the U.S. invasion.*

In reality there were two different but related "interventions" by the U.S.: a military intervention in April 1965; and a political one, beginning in September and reaching its peak during the presidential election campaign. The first (military) intervention continued; at the same time it established the bases for the second (political) intervention. The first phase was accomplished through the use of overwhelming power—43,000 marines, tanks, helicopters, armed mobile units, etc.—and its lightning application to rebel population centers (Northern Santo Domingo, Ciudad Nueva). Once favorable geographic positions were established, policy alternated between selected

assaults and negotiations, each utilized to reinforce the other, while applying maximum pressure to force acceptance of U.S. terms as the basis for "negotiations." The U.S. was willing to negotiate over the formation of a Provisional Government, but not about the Constitution of 1963, which went by the board. The Bosch-oriented leadership (supported by the small Dominican Communist Party or PCD), fearing the continual threats of an imminent massive U.S. attack, reluctantly agreed to negotiate for a provisional government on U.S. terms. The June 14th Movement held out for the Constitutionalist demand. With close to 3,000 Dominicans killed and the city surrounded, the U.S. imposed the Provisional Government through negotiations that were not very different from blackmail.

With the installation of the provisional government, the process of demobilizing the popular forces and reconstituting the ruling elite was begun in earnest. The Army, which had gone over to the Constitutionalists en masse, defected again out of fear or opportunism when the news arrived that U.S. troops had landed, leaving only 1,000 soldiers who actually fought with the rebels. The "meat grinder" tactics were now applied to the popular forces. During the period of the provisional government over 280 Constitutionalist leaders and activists were killed; not one of the murderers was apprehended. (These figures were given to me by Caonabo Javier, Secretary General of the Social Christian Party and were generally supported by most Dominican political observers.)

Selective terror, the reduction of the political strength of the Constitutionalists in the armed forces, and above all the growth of an extensive network of economic-propaganda units especially in the countryside and in government offices, began to introduce the carrot along with the military stick. The more involved U.S. political action groups mentioned to me by the Education Director of the Christian Democratic trade unions included CEDOECA (Dominican Center of Peasant Education), the International Development Foundation, the Community Development Organization, CARITAS, Peace Corps, Agency of International Development and Civic-Action Units (military).

Leaders of the Social Christian party, PRSC, estimated that the U.S.-Balaguer group spent thirteen million dollars on the

election. The idea of U.S. policy makers was to establish a government subordinate to and dependent upon the United States while seeing that opposition political leadership was physically eliminated or neutralized. As "pragmatists," U.S. policy makers took advantage of the existence of the political gangsters to further their policy goals.

In the meantime the popular forces and especially the trade union movement went through a series of militant actions, including the general strike of February (1966), attempting to stem the tide. The American military presence and its determination to stay there at all costs provided the Dominican ruling class the guarantee that the strike could not be successful: there was a force beyond the Dominican Republic which could supply the resources needed to withstand popular pressure. The overwhelming presence of the now almost universally hated U.S. troops, and the inability of the Bosch leadership to propose any way out, began to have a reverse effect on the least political and most vulnerable sectors of the lower class: the women, the older people, the "service sector" (domestic servants, taxi drivers, etc.). Peace and price control, not Balaguer, were what most of these voters wanted; the will to resist among these strata had given way to the wish to subsist. The Balaguer "coalition" took shape amidst political assassinations and selected terror, military control and a single candidate in 70 per cent of the country; fear and confinement to the urban centers for the opposition (Bosch was so frightened of being assassinated that he "campaigned" without ever leaving his house). In the city the Balaguer vote was composed generally of exhausted lower-class women with hungry children and of older male family heads; in the countryside of intimidated peasants receiving politically controlled economic doles, and bombarded on all sides with intense anti-Communist propaganda from the radios and the pulpit. (The Catholic clergy in the countryside carried on a vociferous campaign for Balaguer.) In this context "free elections" cannot be "negotiated" with the United States. The meat-grinder process predetermines the outcome, making the act of voting a means of legitimizing the superior economic and military power of the intervening U.S. policy makers.

The meat-grinder operation achieved its goal; Balaguer was

"elected," authority was "restored," and the United States had created the basis for its "democracy of the gallows."

The unfolding stages—Revolution, Invasion and Restoration—had profound effects on the lower classes, many of whom had previously had little experience in political matters. *The short-run results may be the restoration of U.S. hegemony but the long-run result is the creation of a great reservoir of popular anti-imperialist sentiment which is available for revolutionary movements.* The decisive age group for the revolutionary movement is between 15 and 25 years old. The period from 1961 to 1965 saw the emergence of a political generation distinct in every way from its elders. This generational split reflects the tension between the "fathers" and "sons" who entered political combat at the end of the Trujillo epoch and who are indignant at their parents' subjection to the Great Benefactor. Many of the key revolutionary cadres both during and after the insurrection are drawn from the unemployed sons of the impoverished lower middle class. The four or five unemployed sons subsisting on the salary of a father who is a public employee with no employment for themselves in sight, concentrated with their peer group in *Ciudad Nueva*—this group was in the forefront of the armed struggle. Prior to "the action" it had been virtually impossible for the political parties to organize them. Rafael "Fafa" Taveras, leader of the June 14th Movement, analyzed the political role of the unemployed as follows: because of the economic insecurity and their continual "mobility" (lack of regular place of employment) they do not form the nucleus of a political organization; but they are the sector of the population most easily mobilized for *action.* It is the young unemployed (under 25), politically trained during the last five or six years of struggle, who form the most explosive sector of contemporary Dominican society. With a population whose majority is under 21 and with official and disguised unemployment between 400,000 and 500,000 (in a population of three and one-half million) this sector is of significant social weight. The socio-political force of this group has virtually no *electoral* expression; it expresses itself only through popular mobilizations.

The changes in the relationship of forces in the trade union movement both during and after the insurrection and invasion

are highly revealing. The union confederation with the largest membership (roughly 40 per cent of the unionists in 1963 was CONATRAL—formed and financed by the U.S. embassy and the AFL-CIO. The leftist *Union de Trabajadores Dominicano* contained less than 5 per cent of the unionists. The Social Christian unions, the PRD unions (Boschist) and the independents controlled the rest of the organized workers. During the revolution the CASC (*Confederacion Autonoma de Sindicatos Cristianos*) and the newly formed FOUPSA-CESITRADO (led by PRD supporters with Marxist nuclei) played an important role in directing the insurrectionary commandos. The CONATRAL leadership supported the U.S. invasion and subsequently lost almost all of its union affiliates. The CASC became the leading national confederation, especially in rural organization, while FOUPSA-CESITRADO became the second major trade union force: controlling the big El Romano sugar central (13,000 workers), the transport workers, construction, cement, port, electrical and telephone workers. In total the leftist unions claim 100,000 members, more than five times their strength before the insurrection. More important, perhaps, the organization itself has changed. The PRD leadership under Miguel Soto has been replaced by younger revolutionary trade unionists led by Julio de Pena Valdez, the new secretary-general.

The trade union movement is bigger, stronger and more militant than before the Revolution. Valdez relates how prior to the U.S. invasion only the most politicalized workers were interested in the problem of imperialism; now trade unionists cannot discuss even economic matters without considering it in relation to the struggle against U.S. domination. The mass of trade unionists have become accessible and responsive to an anti-imperialist program and leadership. In the area of the trade unions the United States has suffered a severe setback from which it will be hard to recover.

The rural populace is still divided between minifundistas, who tend still to be under the control of the Church, and the landowners and the sugar workers, especially in the El Romano central who have a long tradition of class struggle. While the majority of the peasantry was not actually involved in the revolution, many of the sugar workers joined the armed popular

forces and two general strikes were "total." The sugar workers receive from five to six pesos a day (1 peso equals 1 dollar) but are unemployed at least six months of the year; this economic insecurity and the concentration of these rural workers facilitates political communication and produces the class solidarity and radical political culture so lacking as yet in the rest of the countryside. The first clashes between the Government and the trade unions will probably occur in El Romano when their demands for wage increases at this U.S.-owned enterprise come up against the wage freeze law decreed by Balaguer. (El Romano is a property of the U.S.-owned South Puerto Rico Sugar Company.) This class conscious and combative rural proletariat could become an important base linking the revolutionary urban popular classes to the exploited poor peasantry.[1]

The "middle class" is divided into various strata each with a differing outlook: the lower white collar workers tend to orient generally toward the PRD (Boschist), and the PRSC (Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano), and the younger groups toward the June 14th Movement. The professionals and upper bureaucracy tend to be divided among the PRD, the PRSC and the Balaguer forces. The majority of the university students tend to be with the United Front of the Revolutionary Left (FRAGUA) which in turn is overwhelmingly June 14th. The results of the student government elections indicate the total absence of support for Balaguer and almost as little for Bosch:

University Election Results (1966)	
FRAGUA	53%
BRUG (Social Christian)	41%
FURR (Boschist)	6%

The margin of victory of the FRAGUA has grown especially after the revolution, while the Bosch and Social Christian support among the students has declined, the former precipitously. The experience of armed struggle against the U.S. marines, in which many of the students contributed to the organization of "com-

[1] The minifundio-latifundio pattern prevails in the Dominican Republic, 86% of the landholders (392,000) own only 19% of the land, while .9% of the landowners (4,400) own 46% of the cultivated land, 20.6 million tarans (16 tarans equal 2.4 acres).

mandos," appears to have strengthened the revolutionary tendency among the students. The absence of any coherent ideology in the PRD, its dependence on the personal leadership of Bosch and its perpetual indecision make it less and less attractive to the new generation of students. The more dynamic and strongly anti-imperialist June 14th Movement appears to be the coming force among a whole generation of students. This tendency is reinforced since the post-Trujillo student body is being drawn more and more from the lower and poorer strata of the middle class. (Students of worker and peasant origin still form less than one percent of the student body.)

The ruling class in the Dominican Republic is not a "feudal" landowning oligarchy. The dominant class is primarily composed of export-importers, commercial agro-businessmen and the "pirate-capitalists" in the military caste. The overwhelming majority of this group favored the U.S. intervention and was the social base that collaborated with the U.S.-directed Balaguer campaign. This ruling class, dependent on the United States and fully committed to U.S. hegemony, is linked through business contacts, privileged status and shared values with the Trujillista police and terrorist organizations, though it may disown specific actions (recent political assassinations) which compromise their U.S. counterparts on their own political position. The U.S. intervention saved this ruling class and hence its dependence on the United States is total. Over 60 per cent of the Dominican economy is state owned, the former private empire of the Trujillo personalist state. The future socio-economic program of the ruling class is based on the gradual "expropriation" by private interests of these properties and of the franchises which had passed from the Trujillo family to the Dominican state.

Parties, Politics, and Consciousness. U.S. policy makers have been using the "grass-roots" ideology ("self-help," "community development") as a means of competing with the militant leftist and Christian trade unionists. U.S. policy makers use "community development" as a means of consolidating the hierarchy of power and wealth by attempting to direct popular energies away from a confrontation with the controllers of wealth and power and by obscuring the nature of the class structure. One

militant trade unionist referred to these operations as "community corrupters" because the marginal changes introduced attempt to weaken social solidarity that builds organizations for struggle and structural change. The United States has not been too effective since the leaders who have been co-opted do not fight to better conditions; they are not leaders selected through struggle, and they compromise themselves by upholding "stability" against popular demands.

The four major political organizations in the Dominican Republic are the *Partido Reformista* (PR), the U.S. financed and directed organization which backed Balaguer; the *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* (PRD), the liberal opposition directed by Bosch; *Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano* (PRSC), the somewhat more reformist, Christian-democratic group; and the radical-nationalist June 14th Movement.

The *Partido Reformista* is not so much a party as an organization mounted by U.S. policy makers and whose leadership personnel was largely recruited from the former Trujillo machine; Balaguer himself was the hand-picked "President" of the Great Benefactor in his last years. The "activists" were largely recruited from lumpen elements, the older unemployed or semiemployed "service" sectors who saw a chance to earn fast money and possible employment opportunities. The rural clergy, mostly Cuban exiles and exports from Franco Spain, and the military provided informal "electoral organizations" along with the U.S.-directed "Community Development" organizations. The social forces of this organization were clearly the ruling class—U.S. and Dominican. The party had one aim: to legitimate their de facto return to power via U.S. bayonets through "free elections." The "Balaguer mass" never was nor is today represented in a party either formally or informally. The *Partido Reformista* was a one-shot deal, constructed for a single purpose, and has never developed a structure or a program. The only contact today between the "activists" and the *Partido Reformista* is the line of job-hunters in front of the "party" office. In light of this lack of firm political organization it is understandable why the police, army *and* restrictive legislation are playing such a decisive role. The other side of the coin is Balaguer's attempts to demobilize and atomize the politicalized urban populace (ban on public meetings—

Tregua Politica) through restrictions on the parties and a prohibition of strikes and union activity (wage-freeze law). In addition, of course, these policies directly benefit the social classes which direct Balaguer's policies, strengthening their control and increasing their economic benefits. Together with this policy Balaguer has utilized the plums of partonage to "co-opt" elements from the right-wing of the PRD. Two PRD leaders have entered Balaguer's Cabinet, Minister of Finance Antonio Martinez Francisco and Minister of Industry and Commerce Jose Antonio Brea Pena. Both were, and some say still are, on Bosch's national committee. The combined use of repression and cooption to destroy political opposition are similar to the "salami tactics" used by Stalin in Eastern Europe during the postwar years.

Bernard Fall has analyzed an extreme application of this totalitarian strategy practiced by the United States in Vietnam. He wrote: "The new mix . . . is one of technological counter-insurgency—if you keep up the kill rate you will eventually run out of enemies. Or at least armed enemies. Of course the whole country will hate you but at least they won't resist you. What you will get is simply a cessation of resistance—an acquiescence in one's fate rather than a belief that your side and your ideas have really prevailed." ("This Isn't Munich, It's Spain." *Ramparts' Vietnam Reader,* San Francisco, 1966.) In this sense U.S. policy had the same goal in the rural areas and among the urban women and older poor of Santo Domingo: the use of overwhelming force produced both an acquiescence as shown in their vote for Balaguer *and* an undying hatred for the United States.

The *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* is a personalistic party, almost totally dominated by Juan Bosch and primarily geared to electoral activity. Though its leaders are mainly middle-class professionals, they are generally oriented by "modern neo-capitalist" ideas. The electoral base of the PRD is largely composed of the urban poor, the industrial workers, public employees, professional groups, shopkeepers, small (and a few larger) manufacturers. It lacks a clear ideology. It is vaguely for a welfare state, mildly anti-imperialist but with strong links with the pro-imperialist Pepe Figueres, Munoz Marin, Leoni groups in Latin America (the self-styled "democratic left"—neither democratic nor left). The more conservative Party leadership's

political position usually predominates in periods of parliamentary activity. And the result is that the class conflicts in society re-emerge in the conflicts between the militant PRD masses and the Party. In 1963 after Bosch was elected, the sugar workers demanded that he live up to his election pledges and deal with their economic needs. Bosch refused to even negotiate until the workers threatened to close down sugar production. Likewise one reason why the rural peasantry did not take the risk of voting for Bosch was that he never made any gesture to relieve their rural misery as he had promised to do in 1962–63. The Bosch Congressmen are continuing this pattern. Deputy Ambriorex Diaz (PRD-Santiago) recently introduced an amendment to a proposed rural minimum wage law giving Balaguer power to lower the minimum wage below two pesos a day in areas where owners couldn't afford to pay it because of low productive land. (*Listin Diario*, August 24.) Similarly, William Nova Rosario (PRD-Independencia) opposed overtime pay. Thus, the PRD leadership defends the profit interests of the small and medium businessmen against the hungry rural workers. . . .

In the Dominion Republic the revolutionary movement of April 1965 took the form of a classic social revolution rather than rural guerrilla warfare. It was an armed uprising emanating from the union centers and based to a large degree on the trade unions, the urban employed and the university and secondary students. In Santo Domingo the high urban unemployment rate, the cleavage in the traditional basis of elite power (the Army) and the availability of a highly mobilizable urban population provided the opportunity for an urban-based mass insurrection. The presence of an external occupation force exacerbates all the latent hostilities generated by externally supported national-capitalist exploitation and provides a unifying theme—anti-imperialism. In this sense the Dominican Revolution resembles the European Resistance movement during the Nazi occupation. . . .

With illiteracy still over 60 per cent, with at least one-third of the labor force of Santo Domingo unemployed (300,000–500,000 out of a total population of 3.5 million), with 400,000 peasants lacking sufficient land to live on, with 200,000 school-age children out of school and with drinkable water available for only five out of every three hundred peasants, the need for profound

structural changes is obvious. The re-emergence of the old ruling class, the restoration and strengthening of the old piratical military-capitalist caste by the United States can only serve to set the stage for a new confrontation. Balaguer's restrictive legal measures are aimed at limiting and containing the challenge of the organized forces. Meanwhile, as Balaguer's promises of reform turn into political assassination and price rises, the popular unrest checked by the U.S. onslaught is slowly beginning to express its strength. Behind the seeming acquiescence and fear there is in the popular consciousness a profound hatred of the totalitarian military and their U.S. counterparts.[2] There is a growing maturity in revolutionary political consciousness among the trade unions, the political militants and the young unemployed. The balance sheet of U.S. policy in the Dominican Republic indicates that the "stability" so brutally imposed is only a transition to a new confrontation.

[2] U.S. white and Negro soldiers were equally brutal and equally condemned. Black Dominican workers told me that when they told North American Negroes to go back to the United States to fight for their own rights the Negroes responded, "Will you pay me $400 a month?" Conservative civil-rights spokesmen who advocate "coalition" with the Democratic Party in order to obtain promises of improvement in the immediate economic position of the North American Negro cannot and do not offer any effective political challenge or opposition to their "coalition" partners, i.e., LBJ, on crucial foreign policy matters. On the contrary, it is not unusual for Negro leaders to support this policy. No one put it better than Staughton Lynd when he said "coalitionism" today is "coalitionism with the Marines."

9

Destroying a Social Revolution: The Case of Vietnam

Richard Morrock

The seven decades of French colonial rule in Vietnam (1884–1954) were by no means lacking in acts of popular resistance to foreign domination. The French regime in Indo-China was marked by racism, brutality, hopelessly backward economic, social and educational policies, and the most fierce exploitation of the indigenous workers and peasants.[1] It was hardly surprising, therefore, that few consecutive years passed without some attempt by the Vietnamese to restore their national independence.

Modern revolutionary nationalism, however—as opposed to traditionalist nationalism, which sought independence under the existing dynasty—became a force in Vietnam only in the 1929–1930 period, when it was given an impetus by the worldwide depression. A party known as the Quoc Dan Dang, or Vietnamese Nationalist Party, had been formed a few years earlier in Canton, China. In February 1930, the Quoc Dan Dang, together with mutinous Vietnamese troops in the French colonial army, staged an insurrection in Tonkin (northern Vietnam). The rebellion was crushed by the French, who destroyed or exiled the entire Quoc Dan Dang leadership.[2]

The abortive nationalist rising had coincided with the foundation of the Vietnamese Communist Party (subsequently named the Indo-China Communist Party, and still later the Lao Dong, or Workers' Party) in Canton by Ho Chi Minh, an experienced

From David Horowitz (ed.), *Containment and Revolution*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, pp. 218–242.

[1] Joseph Buttinger, *The Smaller Dragon*, New York, 1958, p. 424 and Robert Scigliano, *South Vietnam, Nation Under Stress*, Boston, 1963, p. 70.

[2] Donald Lancaster, *The Emancipation of French Indo-China*, London, 1961, pp. 78–79.

revolutionary organiser who had spent many years in exile from his homeland. This new Communist Party was extremely effective in Vietnam, especially among the peasants and landless agricultural labourers. During the summer of 1930 the Communists organised a peasant uprising in the provinces of Ha Tinh and Nghe An, in what is now the southern portion of North Vietnam. Revolutionary soviets were formed, arms were distributed to the peasants, and the holdings of the large landlords were divided up. The French crushed this rising within a matter of weeks, but it proved to be the first battle in a long and bloody struggle.

For ten years the Vietnamese Communists were in relative eclipse, although the Trotskyists picked up much support, especially among the Saigon workers. Whether the Trotskyists had as much support elsewhere in Vietnam is difficult to ascertain, since the French permitted elections only in Cochin-China, the southernmost of the three regions of Vietnam—even in Cochin-China, most of the population did not qualify for the franchise. Nevertheless, the Trotskyists obtained the overwhelming majority of the vote in the 1939 elections. Their criticism of the "Stalinist" Communists was based upon the assumption that the proletariat, rather than the peasantry, should lead the revolution in Vietnam; and some of their theoreticians even attacked Mao Tse-tung for setting up peasant soviets in China, on the grounds that this was an ultra-left strategy.[3] The Trotskyists, however, beset by internal divisions and insisting that the revolution be led by a class which had not been fully developed in Vietnam, rapidly lost ground to the Communist Party once changing conditions made it possible to think about revolution again.

This happened in 1940, when the Japanese occupied French Indo-China. Unlike the situation in the other South-East Asian colonial territories, the Japanese met with little resistance from the established authorities in Indo-China. The collaboration between the Vichy regime and the Germans found its counterpart in Asia in the collaboration between the French colonialists and the Japanese. During the first year of the Japanese occupation, the French suppressed with great severity two uprisings by the

[3] Frank N. Trager (ed.), *Marxism in Southeast Asia*, Stanford, Calif., 1959; esp. chapter on Vietnam by I. Milton Sacks.

Vietnamese—one (in Tonkin) led by right-wing nationalists, the other (in the Mekong delta) led by the Communists.[4]

With the urban proletariat too weak and too close to its peasant origins to lead the resistance, and with the peasants themselves suffering under the triple yoke of the Vietnamese landowners, the French colonialists and the Japanese invaders, it was evident that the resistance would have to be led by some broad front, uniting all patriotic Vietnamese regardless of class, but capable nevertheless of appealing to the most down-trodden members of society who had the most to gain from revolution. The Communist Party saw this need, and created, in May 1941, the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh, or Vietnamese Independence League. Besides the Communist Party, the Democratic Party and the Radical Socialist Party were represented in a united front, which was known for short as the Viet Minh. The Democratic Party was representative of the petty bourgeoisie, and the Radical Socialists represented the intellectuals. What was created was a "bloc of three classes," similar to Mao Tse-tung's "bloc of four classes" (workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie) but without the national bourgeoisie, which did not exist in Vietnam. Within the Viet Minh, the Communist Party maintained its identity and its distinct Marxist-Leninist programme.

Late in 1944, the Viet Minh began organising armed guerrilla resistance bands in Tonkin. These guerrillas had the support of the American office of Strategic Services, which had a base in southern China. The rapid growth of the guerrilla movement was aided by the break-up of the alliance between the Japanese and the French. In March 1945, fearing that the French would switch sides, the Japanese put them in concentration camps, while declaring Vietnam "independent." The Viet Minh took advantage of this coup to extend its activities into central and southern Vietnam—where revolutionary bases were created which were never liquidated even at the zenith of Ngo Dinh Diem's power.[5]

[4] Ellen J. Hammer, *The Struggle for Indo-China*, Stanford, Calif., 1954, pp. 24–25.

[5] *Breaking Our Chains* (North Vietnamese documents of the August 1945 Revolution), Hanoi, 1960, pp. 29–30.

When Japan surrendered, five months later, its troops were still in occupation of ex-French Indo-China. Returning to their barracks, the Japanese troops handed power over to the Viet Minh, which was the only other force in the country at the time, and which still enjoyed the support of the western allies. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam was established in August 1945 in Hanoi, amidst great popular enthusiasm.

On September 14, 1945, the London *Times,* commenting on the political situation in Vietnam, explained to its readers: "There seem to be only two parties of any significance at the moment, the Viet-min and the Communists. The Viet-min, which is the stronger, is especially active in the north."[6]

After 1945 American far eastern policy underwent a change. Whereas during the war, the United States had been willing to cooperate with communist-led resistance movements in Asia, postwar American policy was directed entirely against communism, and was not loath to unite with colonialists and even former Japanese collaborators in the struggle against communist-led or supported movements for national liberation. The British, for their part, were consistent in their support of colonialism. Immediately after the Japanese surrender, a British division landed in Saigon on the pretext of disarming the Japanese; they were welcomed as allies and liberators by the Vietnamese and the Viet Minh. Instead of disarming the Japanese, however, the British permitted them to keep their weapons, and used the Japanese troops for security duty. At the same time, they freed numerous French and Foreign Legion soldiers, who were given back their arms. Late in September 1945, these French and Foreign Legion troops attacked the Vietnamese in Saigon, carrying out a massacre and driving the Viet Minh authorities out of Saigon.[7]

In January 1946, the Viet Minh held nation-wide elections (in the occupied areas of southern Vietnam these elections were held underground). The northern two-thirds of the country had already been occupied by Chinese Nationalist troops, who

[6] Lancaster, p. 130.

[7] Robert Payne, *The Revolt of Asia,* New York, 1947, p. 226 and Lancaster, p. 130.

brought with them cadres of the Quoc Dan Dang and other nationalist organisations. Although the Chinese did not use military force against the Viet Minh authorities, they did encourage these rival nationalist factions, and helped them seize control of several northern Vietnamese districts. When the Viet Minh held elections, it promised a certain number of seats in the National Assembly to these nationalist factions; thus the election took on the character of a plebiscite. Nevertheless, even an American source admits: ". . . the National Assembly that emerged as a result of the voting was a fairly representative body."[8] Even the French realised that the pro-independence forces in Vietnam had widespread popular backing. In March 1946, France recognised the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as the legitimate government of all Vietnam. In the agreement signed by Ho Chi Minh and the Deputy High Commissioner of Indo-China, Jean Sainteny, France stated that she "recognises the Republic of Vietnam as a free state having its government and its parliament, its army and finances. . . ."[9] Vietnam agreed to be a member state of the ephemeral French Union, and French troops were permitted to relieve the Chinese Nationalists in Hanoi and Haiphong.

Some critics of the Viet Minh[10] maintain that Ho Chi Minh could have obtained an even greater degree of independence from France in 1946 than he actually settled for. This argument overlooks the fact that had the Viet Minh not accepted the French offer (whose primary drawback was that French troops were to be permitted to remain), the French could have negotiated the same agreement with one of the other nationalist groups. The Viet Minh's People's Army had not yet been in existence for two years, and was in no position to carry on a simultaneous fight against both the French and the anti-Viet Minh nationalists. It is nevertheless true that the Viet Minh placed all too much hope on the influence that the French Communist Party could or would be willing to exert on the French government to take

[8] Trager, p. 159.

[9] Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, "What Every American Should Know About Indo-China," *Monthly Review*, June 1954, pp. 52–53.

[10] Doug Jenness, *War and Revolution in Vietnam* (Young Socialist Pamphlet), New York, 1965, p. 9.

the reasonable line in Indo-China. This was an understandable, if regrettable, mistake.

The Viet Minh took advantage of the respite obtained by means of the March agreement to eliminate several political groups which would certainly have given them trouble later on. In the north, these were the Quoc Dan Dang and some other nationalist parties. In the south, they were mainly the Trotskyists and the Hoa Hao. Of these, only the last-named offered any serious resistance.

Cochin-China has long been distinguished from the rest of Vietnam by the existence of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai religious cults—the former a reform Buddhist sect, and the latter an eclectic combination of Confucianism, Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. Fervent adherents of these religions probably number not quite a million at the present time, but for historical reasons these two cults have had influence out of proportion to the number of their followers. The Cao Dais are concentrated in Tay Ninh province, due north of Saigon, while the Hoa Haos have their base in An Giang and Kien Phong provinces, along the upper Bassac river. Both base areas border Cambodia; both lie along important trade routes. Much of the trade between the Cochin-Chinese seaports and Cambodia was in the hands of these religious groups; and the Hoa Haos still monopolise the trade between the government-controlled and NLF-controlled zones of South Vietnam.[11]

The Hoa Haos in particular were strongly opposed to the Viet Minh, since their movement, originally based on craftsmen and traders, had subsequently come under the control of the large landowners. During the Japanese occupation, both religious groups organised their own armed forces, whose members were placed on the Japanese payroll. After World War II, the French took over the task of sponsoring these military organisations.

While the Viet Minh was fighting the Hoa Hao, the French were conspiring to overthrow the Ho Chi Minh government and to restore the colonial regime. They cut off the flow of rice from Cochin-China to northern Vietnam, causing a famine. The Viet

[11] Jean Lacouture, *Vietnam: Between Two Truces*, New York, 1966, p. 101.

Minh abolished taxes in Tonkin as a relief measure, leaving the Vietnamese government dependent upon customs for its finances. The French then demanded the right to control customs at the seaport of Haiphong; the Vietnamese resisted this demand, and the French retaliated by bombarding the Vietnamese quarter of Haiphong, killing thousands of civilians.

This bloodshed marked the beginning of the French-Indo-China War. By 1954, about half a million soldiers were involved on each side in the conflict: fighting for the Viet Minh were Vietnamese peasants, workers and intellectuals, plus smaller numbers of Laotians and Cambodians who carried the struggle into their own homelands; on the French side were troops from metropolitan France, from North Africa and from West Africa. There were also Indo-Chinese troops, who generally fought with singular lack of enthusiasm, at least according to French General Navarre.[12] There were, in addition, the soldiers of the Foreign Legion fighting on France's side, many of them former German Nazis and Italian Fascists. Their conduct was hardly calculated to endear the French cause to the Indo-Chinese peoples.

In 1947 the French—possibly on American advice—approached ex-Emperor Bao Dai, who was living in Hong Kong on a Viet Minh pension. Bao Dai had served as puppet ruler under the French during the 1930s—his first Minister of the Interior being Ngo Dinh Diem. Later he had served the Japanese, and had eventually abdicated voluntarily when the Viet Minh came to power. After cooperating with the Viet Minh briefly, he retired from public life. The French brought him back to Vietnam to head a puppet government, giving a fig leaf of legitimacy to the French colonialist endeavour.

The only significant group to defect from the independence struggle during the French-Indo-China War was the Catholic minority in Tonkin. French missionaries, over the years, had converted about ten per cent of the Vietnamese to Catholicism; in Tonkin, these converts lived in their own villages, under the political control of their priests (large landlords being very few outside the Mekong delta). The priests, in turn, followed the advice of their bishops and archbishops, many of whom were

[12] Lancaster, p. 312.

Frenchmen, Spaniards and Irishmen. Fanatically opposed to communism, the Catholic hierarchy in Vietnam succeeded in getting the Catholic peasants to accept Bao Dai rather than Ho Chi Minh.[13]

The majority of the Vietnamese population, however, gave enthusiastic support to the Viet Minh. Part of this support was due to the progressive social policies carried out in the liberated areas which were under Viet Minh control. For example, the Viet Minh campaigned against illiteracy, which had actually increased under French colonial rule. The Viet Minh also supported autonomy for the tribal minorities, who numbered 2½ to 3 million, largely in the Tonkin mountains. The Viet Minh had their headquarters in one of the areas populated by the tribesmen, and many tribesmen rose to high positions in the Viet Minh and the Vietnamese People's Army.

Finally, the Viet Minh initiated a program of land reform, which had far-reaching effect in the Mekong delta; in this fertile region, most of the land belonged to a relative handful of extremely wealthy landowners. At first, the Viet Minh reduced rents and interest rates; when this caused most of the landowners to side with the French, the Viet Minh began confiscating the holdings of collaborators. This included most of the arable land in the Mekong delta; the large majority of the landowners spent the years of the anti-French struggle in Saigon. Finally, in 1953, the Viet Minh announced its intention of distributing the holdings of all large landowners, regardless of the latter's political views.

Once the Communists had emerged victorious in the Chinese Civil War, it was possible for the Viet Minh to receive assistance from the outside. However, one should not overestimate the importance of this aid. No Chinese or Soviet soldiers ever fought for the Viet Minh, and most of the weapons used by the Viet Minh had been captured from the other side. This is generally the case in guerrilla movements.

The French debacle of Dien Bien Phu was the occasion, rather than the cause, of the decision by Paris to terminate the war. The United States, apparently ready to fight to the last French-

[13] Lacouture, p. 103.

man, proposed a joint U.S.-British-French offensive against the Viet Minh, which would include the use of nuclear weapons. For several reasons, this idea never came to fruition. First, the French people had been fighting a losing war in Indo-China for more than seven years, and were not anxious to prolong it. Second, Great Britain was reluctant to enter the war, since its own interests had not been directly threatened. Third, there was much opposition to intervention in the United States, where Eisenhower had been elected less than two years previously on a platform of ending the Korean War.[14] Finally, it was not certain, nor even probable, that atomic weapons could have been effectively used against a guerrilla army.

Thus, in 1954, almost nine years after the creation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the French-Indo-China War was ended at the conference table at Geneva. As could be seen by the refusal of American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to shake hands with his Chinese opposite number, Chou En-lai, it was a bitter pill for the United States to swallow. Grumbled *U.S. News and World Report*: "The non-Communist white man, in a word, seems to be through in Asia. It's up to the non-Communist Asians now."[15]

According to the Geneva agreement, Vietnam was to be temporarily divided along the Ben Hai river, which ran through Annam (central Vietnam) near the 17th parallel. French Union forces, including the Vietnamese who had fought for France, were to be regrouped south of the armistice line, where Bao Dai still retained nominal authority. Viet Minh troops were to be withdrawn north of the line, where the Viet Minh was in control. Civilian sympathisers of one side or the other were given until 1956 to change zones. Elections were to be held throughout all of Vietnam no later than the summer of 1956, in order to set up a national government with genuine popular support. In the North, nearly all the Catholics in two bishoprics (Bui Chu and Phat Diem) left for the South, rather than live under the Viet Minh.[16] They were accompanied by former French Union sol-

[14] Bernard Fall, *The Two Vietnams; A Political and Military Analysis*, New York, 1963, pp. 225–228.

[15] "What Comes After Indo-China Truce?" *U.S. News and World Report*, July 30, 1954.

[16] Lacouture, p. 105.

diers of Vietnamese origin and their families. Altogether, these evacuees numbered about 875,000, mainly Catholics.

From the South, about 100,000 Viet Minh soldiers were evacuated. Civilian sympathisers of the Viet Minh, however, remained in the native villages, assuming that the anti-Communist interregnum in South Vietnam would be brief. Although the Viet Minh lost nearly all of its military strength south of the 17th parallel, it retained its political influence throughout the countryside, both in villages which had been in liberated zones during the war, and in villages from which the French withdrew after 1954. Joseph Alsop wrote that according to American informants in Saigon, "... outside the feudal domains of the military religious sects, anywhere from 50 to 70 per cent of the southern Indo-Chinese villages are subject to Viet Minh influence or control. French experts give still higher percentages, between 60 and 90."[17] In 1957, William Henderson stated in *Foreign Affairs*:

> The exact strength of the Communists in South Vietnam is a matter of speculation. After May 18, 1955, the date on which all Viet Minh forces were supposedly withdrawn from the South, the Communists continued to exercise effective political authority in many rural areas. They had extensively infiltrated the government apparatus, the police and the armed forces; and they enjoyed considerable support, or at least acquiescence, among large segments of the rural population.[18]

And after the fall of Bao Dai in 1955, according to I. Milton Sacks, "The Republic of Vietnam ... had little real authority in the area that was nominally defined as its territory."[19]

When the French withdrew, the official head of state in Saigon was Bao Dai, and his Prime Minister was Ngo Dinh Diem, who had taken office just before the start of the Geneva conference. After Geneva, Bao Dai followed his erstwhile sponsors back to France. Diem was left behind to manage the affairs of the tottering puppet regime.

[17] *New York Herald Tribune,* March 1, 1955, and Ellen J. Hammer, *The Struggle for Indo-China Continues,* Stanford, Calif., 1955, p. 36.

[18] William Henderson, "South Vietnam Finds Herself," *Foreign Affairs,* New York, January, 1957, pp. 288–289.

[19] Trager, p. 168.

The anti-Communist forces in South Vietnam made use of the two years of grace between the Geneva armistice and the mid-1956 deadline for the elections that never were to take place. Diem had no support, or even authority, in the countryside at that point, and even in Saigon he was being challenged by the Hoa Haos, the Cao Dais, the Binh Xuyen bandit group and dissident army elements; however, Diem knew that he could call on the United States for assistance . . . and this he did.

As soon as the armistice was in effect, the United States began the creation of "Free Vietnam." This project was carried out on two levels. In South Vietnam, about $250,000,000 per year in military and economic aid was poured in by the United States. Meanwhile, in the United States, a massive campaign was initiated to convince the American people that South Vietnam was a showcase of anti-Communism, inhabited by a "brave little people" who had "resisted Communist aggression," and who were heroically tackling the problems of poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment under the leadership of the immensely popular, democratic, anti-Communist patriot, Ngo Dinh Diem.

A central factor in the establishment of "Free Vietnam," both in terms of its legitimacy at home and its image in the United States, was the election of October 1955. Between 1954 and 1955, Diem had succeeded in winning the loyalty of the generals in Bao Dai's army—this was accomplished when the United States made it clear that it would not give aid to any military clique which toppled Diem. Subsequently, Diem used the South Vietnamese army to crush the Binh Xuyen, the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao. Without foreign subsidies, the armies of the cults lost most of their effectiveness.

Diem then chose to hold a plebiscite on the question of the continuation of the monarchy. The voters had a choice between a republic under Diem or the old monarchy under Bao Dai. Wrote David Hotham of the London *Times*: "... It would be well to destroy the myth that Diem's regime was ever a popular one. No one who was in Saigon in October 1955 [the month of the plebiscite], unless blind to realities, would dispute this."[20]

[20] Richard Lindholm (ed.), *Vietnam: The First Five Years*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1959, p. 347.

The results of the plebiscite were: Diem, 5,721,735; Bao Dai, 63,017.[21]

There are several remarkable things about this result. The total population of South Vietnam at the time was perhaps 13 million—of whom nearly a million were Chinese or French citizens, not eligible to vote. About half of the population was below the voting age, due to the low life expectancy common in colonial countries, and to the effects of the long war. Of the eligible voters, therefore, close to 95 per cent must have turned out for this election—which was held little more than one year after independence—and of these, almost 99 per cent voted for Diem. (One might compare this to India, where less than half of the eligible voters participate in national elections, of whom only about 50 per cent vote for the Congress Party.) Diem's overwhelming victory could only have been caused by two things: fraud on a gigantic scale; or a highly disciplined, loyal, efficient and mass-based political movement. There can be little argument as to which was responsible; Diem's mass organisation, the National Revolutionary Movement, was only formed *after* the 1955 election.

This political organisation, which was not a political party in the accepted sense of the term, was to play an important role in the newly created Republic of Vietnam. It was a broad front, intended to mobilise popular support for the regime, especially among the youth. The NRM sponsored many meetings in the countryside, where, according to the Saigon press, innumerable Viet Minh cadres would "recant their error" and "rally to the government."[22] Civil servants were obliged to belong to the NRM's auxiliary.

Real power lay with another political organisation, the Can Lao, or "Labour and Personalism Party," which was similar in structure and purpose to the Japanese Black Dragon Society or the South African Broederbond. It had five-man cells, and its members hid their affiliation. The members of the Can Lao joined other political groups in order to dominate them. They informed the government of the behaviour of civil servants and army officers.

[21] Buttinger, p. 468.

[22] *The Fight Against the Subversive Communist Activities in Vietnam* (*Review Horizons* reprint), Saigon, 1957, p. 5.

The Can Lao was the typical apparatus of a totalitarian fascist state.[23] . . .

Before long, it appeared as if His Majesty the Emperor had been replaced by His Majesty the President. There was the same corruption, the same lack of contact with the masses, and the same subservience to a foreign power that had prevailed under Bao Dai. European writers, generally, were not taken in by the pretence of democracy. Bernard Fall wrote that the Diem government "is, in terms of the actual relations between government and governed, an absolute monarchy, such as . . . Franco's Spain has been since 1939.[24] David Hotham wrote, under the heading *General Consideration of American Programs:*

> The chief hope of defending the south from the communism which threatened it at the time of Dien Bien Phu, and which still threatens it today [1959]—for the battle is not won, but hardly begun—was that somebody should succeed in uniting all the genuinely anti-Communist nationalist elements into a regime which would have the confidence of the southern people. Had that been done, the bastion would have been strong. But this is precisely what has not been done. Instead of uniting it, Diem has divided the south. Instead of merely crushing his legitimate enemies, the Communists, he has crushed all opposition of every kind, however anti-Communist it might be. In so doing, he has destroyed the very basis on which his regime should be founded. He has been able to do this, simply and solely because of the massive dollar aid he has had from across the Pacific, which kept in power a man who, by all the laws of human and political affairs, would long ago have fallen. Diem's main supporters are to be found in North America, not in Free Vietnam. This is an unnatural situation, and unnatural situations do not last long.[25]

On the other hand, Diem received much favourable publicity in the United States. There were some sceptics, at first, such as Joseph Alsop, who described Diem as "narrow, obstinate and petty,"[26] but most other writers—experts and journalists alike—

[23] Wesley Fishel (ed.), *Problems of Freedom: South Vietnam Since Independence,* East Lansing, Michigan, 1961, pp. 48–49.

[24] Fall, *Two Vietnams,* p. 237.

[25] Lindholm, p. 348.

[26] *New York Herald Tribune,* March 31, 1955 and Lancaster, p. 348.

showed almost unlimited enthusiasm for South Vietnam's dictator. He was hailed as "The Miracle Man of Vietnam" (possibly for the skill with which he made his political opponents disappear), "the Churchill of Asia," "the greatest little man in Asia," and so forth. In 1956 the historian Alan Nevins said in a letter to the American Friends of Vietnam that "Vietnam is a country of which the West may feel proud."[27] In 1959, Ellen Hammer stated, ". . . the service rendered by Diem to free Asia may well extend beyond the frontiers of the Republic of Vietnam,"[28] while Joseph Buttinger concluded simultaneously: "In Vietnam the Communists are now being deprived of total victory because the West is applying policies consonant with the principles of a democratic world."[29]

Pro-"Free Vietnam" publicity in the United States made much of the 875,000 refugees who left North Vietnam to settle in the South between 1954 and 1956. Robert Scheer effectively debunks the argument that the flight of these people was proof that the Communists were hated by the majority of the Vietnamese.[30] Most of the refugees, of course, were Catholics, and nearly all had fought for the French. Many went to South Vietnam in the belief that they would be given land—a commodity in short supply in the Tonkin delta region. Several tens of thousands of these refugees were settled in the Cai San colony, a block of model villages in the Trans-Bassac area of South Vietnam. But hundreds of thousands more were concentrated in a ring around Saigon;[31] this area was already overpopulated, and it is certain that for so many newcomers to have been settled there, many of the original inhabitants would have to have been displaced.

The refugees, furthermore, were the only section of the South Vietnamese population which the Diem regime felt it could rely upon. With the assistance of the International Rescue Committee, educated Catholic refugees were brought into the

[27] *I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly*, Washington, October 28, 1963.
[28] Lindholm, p. 41.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[30] Robert Scheer, *How the United States Got Involved in Vietnam*, Santa Barbara, Calif., 1966, esp. pp. 26–31.
[31] Lacouture, p. 105.

Diem government to replace indigenous South Vietnamese, whom Diem distrusted as too pro-French.[32]

There was only one other social group in South Vietnam which placed itself entirely in Diem's camp—the large landowners from the Mekong delta. This small but important group had identified with the French cause for reasons of class interest, and supported Diem for the same reason.

When the French-Indo-China War ended, the Viet Minh had already distributed the extensive holdings of these gentlemen, without compensation. Once a certain amount of stability had been achieved in Saigon, however, the landlords decided that they wanted to get their property back, and some even hoped for the back rents for the years they had spent hiding in Saigon. Diem came to their assistance, drawing upon the services of the American expert, Wolf Ladejinsky. Ladejinsky produced a "land reform" ordinance which served the interests of the landlords, rather than the peasants. This ordinance "was in fact proclaimed at a time when large landowners seemed to be regaining influence in places of political power, and was in many respects an inadequate compromise measure."[33] It was to be expected, of course, that the failure of the Viet Minh to gain control of South Vietnam would mean that its policies—for better or worse—would not be implemented south of the Ben Hai river. What was most ironic is that Ladejinsky, the man in charge of giving back the Mekong delta to the landlords, had himself once been labelled a communist by Senator Joseph McCarthy.

The program seemed progressive enough on the surface, if one did not know the realities of property relations in the South Vietnamese countryside after 1954. It called for the reduction of rents from the prewar 40–50 per cent to 15–25 per cent of the principal crop, depending upon the value of the land for the exact percentage. Interest charges on loans, and rent on tools and draft animals, was not to exceed 12 per cent.[34] As for land ownership, the landlords were "limited" to 245 acres (although more land could be allotted them for "religious purposes"), and the

[32] Scheer, p. 29.

[33] David Wurfel, "Agrarian Reform in the Republic of Vietnam," *Far Eastern Survey*, Yale, June 1937, p. 81.

[34] Lindholm, p. 201.

land that was confiscated was paid for. Ten per cent of its value was paid immediately in cash, and the remainder in government bonds.[35] Regulations regarding abandoned land were favourable to the owners; landlords had only to "declare their intention either to lease abandoned land or to cultivate it themselves; otherwise they were to be considered absent.[36]

The reforms were made primarily for the purpose of impressing American public opinion with the "democratic national revolution" that was supposedly taking place in South Vietnam. The provisions which restricted the landlords were, in fact, not always enforced. Furthermore, and most important, Diem's "reforms" constituted actual retrogression. The government was "reducing" rents which the Viet Minh had abolished, selling land which the Viet Minh had given away, and reestablishing estates which the Viet Minh had broken up!

Peasant resistance to these measures was widespread, foreshadowing the civil war which was to come. Already in the spring of 1955, Ladejinsky reported finding what the *New York Times* described as "a strange land reform problem." The *Times* elaborated: "Usually it is the tenants who are most eager for land reform and the landlords who are reluctant. In the southern half of Vietnam, however, the landlords are accepting the Government's land reform plan more readily than the tenants."[37]

The peasants, led by Viet Minh cadres, began to organise violent resistance to Diem's effort to undo the Viet Minh's land reform. "Indeed," wrote Wesley Fishel in 1959, "the main target of the Communist effort in recent months has been the Government's land reform program. . . . Terrorist attacks on agents sent out from Saigon to explain the land reform idea or to carry out land surveys or division have caused delays. Nevertheless, some 750,000 of a total of about one million acres of eligible rice land in South Vietnam have been redistributed."[38] Fishel does not specify in what manner the land was redistributed.

[35] Tillman Durdin, "Vietnam Extends Agrarian Reform," *New York Times*, April 2, 1959.

[36] Lindholm, p. 201.

[37] Tillman Durdin, "Ladejinsky Finds Vietnam Paradox," *New York Times*, April 5, 1955.

[38] Wesley Fishel, "Vietnam's War of Attrition," *The New Leader*, New York, December 7, 1959, p. 18.

Ladejinsky and Diem viewed the growing resistance in the countryside not as a danger signal, but as a sign of success. "The Viet Minh's opposition to South Vietnam's reforms," wrote Ladejinsky in 1961, "is violent precisely because they are successful."[39] If violent resistance was the mark of a successful agrarian policy, one can only speculate as to what might have caused Ladejinsky to consider the program a failure.

A similar discrepancy between theory and practice arose in other programs of "social reform" initiated under Diem. Wrote Sidney Lens in 1964:

> The government, for instance, set up a national agricultural credit organisation to provide credit for the poor. But the local overlords administer it in such a way that only the wealthy can borrow money. The rules and requirements exclude the vast majority. After securing low-interest loans, the village rich then lend the money to the poor at usurious rates.[40]

The Saigon government's reactionary policies in the countryside were bad enough by themselves, and when the Diem regime also turned its back on industrialization[41] the situation became intolerable for the masses of South Vietnamese.

Yet another source of the revolt against the Diem regime was its policies towards the minorities. Whereas in Tonkin, the Northern government created two autonomous zones for the two million tribesmen who inhabit the area, in the South, where the mountains are populated by 500,000 to 1,000,000 tribesmen (or *montagnards*), no such autonomous area was formed. Even the individual provinces inhabited by the tribesmen were not given autonomy; their boundaries were shuffled around at will by the Saigon government. Thousands of Vietnamese from the lowlands, many of them Northern refugees, were colonised in *montagnard* territory in a government program which pleased neither the *montagnards* nor the Vietnamese settlers.

Almost half a million Cambodians, living in the Mekong delta, were also subjected to discriminatory treatment. They were forced to change their names to Vietnamese equivalents,

[39] Fishel (ed.), p. 175.

[40] Sidney Lens, "Vietnam: The Only Hope," *The Progressive*, Wisconsin, November 1964, p. 23.

[41] Fishel (ed.), p. 69.

prohibited from using their own language in their schools, denied the right to practise certain religious and cultural customs, and so forth.[42] Such policies of the Diem regime drove the majority of the Cambodians and *montagnards* into the Communist camp.

The realities of South Vietnam were, in a word, very different from the "Miracle" that was presented to the American people—who were prevented by the anti-Communist hysteria in the United States from ever hearing the other side of the story. The regime which was ballyhooed as a "democratic" and "nationalist" alternative to Viet Minh rule was neither democratic nor nationalist. Its social base consisted entirely of the country's propertied élite plus the refugees from the North, both of these groups having sympathised with the French during the struggle for independence. Not only did the socio-economic policies of the South Vietnamese government harm the workers and peasants, but they even failed to win support from intermediate strata such as the intellectuals (many of whom emigrated to Paris) and the petty bourgeoisie (who were largely Chinese or members of the religious cults). South Vietnam was, of course, too small and backward to produce a national bourgeoisie. As a result, when South Vietnam began to slide back into civil war, there was no one to come to Diem's aid—except the Americans.

The first months of the Diem Regime were marked by the repression of the non-Communist opposition, but it was not long before the government began to crack down on its most dangerous enemy, the former Viet Minh cadres who wielded great influence in the countryside. Wrote Philippe Devillers: "The *defacto* integration of South Vietnam with the American military defense structure implied that the region ought to be secure, and hence, ought to be purged of anything which might, however remotely, serve the Red cause."[43]

The slaughter of Communists, Communist sympathisers and alleged Communists in South Vietnam brings to mind the excesses

[42] Huot Sambath, Declaration Before the General Assembly, Cambodian Mission to the United Nations, September 23, 1963, p. 6.

[43] Philippe Devillers, "The Struggle for the Unification of Vietnam," *The China Quarterly*, London, January-March, 1962, p. 12.

of the Spanish fascists after their victory in 1939, or of the Indonesian rightists after October 1965. The American press, which seldom tired of reporting new "miracles" in South Vietnam, was strangely silent on the question of this frightful purge which took the lives of perhaps as many as 75,000 people—most of them activists in the struggle for independence against the French. One exception was *Foreign Affairs* magazine, where William Henderson, after pointing out that "the Communists in South Vietnam played a fairly passive role after Geneva," went on to say:

> As the Diem régime waxed in strength and confidence, it gave increasing attention to rooting out the Communist danger. All the techniques of political and psychological warfare, as well as pacification campaigns involving extensive military operations, have been brought to bear against the underground. Some of the methods employed, such as anti-Communist denunciation rallies and self-criticism meetings, smack of practices which the Communists themselves perfected long ago; and it is clear that the usual democratic safeguards have not always been upheld.[44]

The Diem regime itself made no secret of its desire to liquidate the "Viet Minh remnants." Diem personally headed the "Campaign to Denounce Communists." A semi-official Saigon publication states:

> President Ngo Dinh Diem's government had first to dedicate itself to the reestablishment of order and unity upon the privileges enjoyed by the great barons who defied governmental authority [i.e. the leaders of the religious sects]. Once this indispensable task was carried out it remained to free the country from a no less deadly plague—the subversive action of innumerable communist agents left on the spot by the Viet Minh to stalemate all efforts towards recovery. *It meant the waging of a new civil war....* (Italics—R.M.)[45]

Informers were used to help classify the population as "loyal" or "disloyal," according to criteria which would have placed the majority of the South Vietnamese in the latter category.[46] Those denounced as Communists were labelled "Viet

[44] Henderson, pp. 288–289.

[45] *Communist Activities in Vietnam*, pp. 2–3.

[46] Wilfred Burchett, *The Furtive War: The United States in Vietnam and Laos*, New York, 1963, p. 39.

Cong," literally "Vietnamese Communist." This term was used instead of "Viet Minh," which was the name of a coalition organisation.

The repression grew in intensity between 1955 and 1959, by which time the victims had begun to fight back with increasing success. We return to Philippe Devillers, who described the slaughter of "Communist agents."

> The Diem government . . . launched out in 1957 into what amounted to a series of man-hunts. The population were called upon to redouble their vigilance and to denounce all Communist activity. . . . Guided by informers, "mopping-up operations" became only too frequent, especially in the Centre, where the President's brother, Ngo Dinh Can, had recourse to the toughest of methods.

The pattern of these man-hunts was as follows:

> . . . denunciation, searches and raids, arrest of suspects, plundering, interrogations enlivened sometimes by torture (even of innocent people), deportation and regrouping of population suspected of intelligence with the rebels, etc. . . .
>
> The Communists, finding themselves hunted down, began to fight back. Informers were sought out and shot in increasing numbers, and village chiefs who had presided over the denunciations, village notables, and members of the militia who took part, were frequently treated in the same way.[47]

Conditions in Diem's prison camps staggered the imagination; cases of political prisoners (non-Communist in this case) being blinded, starved and deliberately maimed only came to light after Diem was overthrown. But even in December 1958, the North Vietnamese government reported that as many as a thousand prisoners in the Phu Loi "reeducation centre" (Dr. Wesley Fishel's phrase) had been killed by their guards. This atrocity, more than any other single event, signalled the beginning of the armed resistance to Diem's fascist regime.

The first targets of the resistance were the informers, sycophants and petty tyrants whom Diem and his brothers were relying on throughout the countryside. Once the informers had been assassinated or driven out, the government forces found it impossible to distinguish "subversives" from the population at large.

[47] Devillers, pp. 12–13.

Next came the landlords, who fled to the safety of the cities, as they had done in the 1950's. Next, the government officials, who either joined the Communists, stayed at their posts with the tacit approval of the Communists, or lost their lives. By 1960, according to Bernard Fall, about 10,000 of Diem's civil servants, soldiers, police and informers in the villages had been killed. Because of this, wrote Fall, "the Diem regime had lost a large part of the battle for South Vietnam before it had even begun in earnest. . . . "[48]

Frustrated by the inability of the government to deal with the spreading insurrection, the South Vietnamese army launched a coup d'état against Diem in November 1960. The purpose of the coup was to force Diem either to change his ways or to step down. Trapped in the presidential palace, Diem began to negotiate with the rebel troops, stalling them until loyal troops could arrive in Saigon and rescue him. The coup was crushed.

Because of this abortive coup, several things came to pass. First, Diem began to distrust his top generals, and from then on promoted officers on grounds of loyalty rather than competence. Second, the United States became aware of the Communist threat to "Free Vietnam," and of the inability of Diem to cope with it without direct foreign intervention. Third, the Communists and their allies, taking advantage of the upsurge of anti-government sentiment sparked by the coup, organised the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam in December 1960.

Like the Viet Minh, the National Liberation Front is a broad coalition—but due to the religious, cultural and political diversity in South Vietnam, the NLF is even broader than the Viet Minh. It includes the People's Revolutionary Party—the equivalent of the Lao Dong of North Vietnam; the Democratic Party and the Radical Socialist Party are also represented. Also included within the NLF's leadership are the South Vietnamese peace movement, organised in 1954 to ensure the observance of the Geneva accords; the Binh Xuyen; organisations of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao religions; and movements of tribesmen and Cambodians. The South Vietnamese Catholic community is represented among the leadership, and the "Association of Militants for Peace," an

[48] Bernard Fall, "Vietnam, New Faces, More Chaos," *The Nation*, New York, December 7, 1963.

organisation of ex-members of the South Vietnamese army, also plays an important role. . . .

As the Diem government came to rely more and more upon American assistance, U.S. officials such as Ambassador Lodge and Secretary of State Rusk began making periodic statements dismissing the NLF as a foreign-supported terrorist outfit which had virtually no strength within South Vietnam. In fact, between 1960 and 1964, the area under the control of the NLF increased by about four times. When it was founded, the NLF exercised virtual control over three provinces (An Xuyen in the extreme south, Kien Tuong to the northwest of Saigon, and Quang Ngai along the central coast). By mid-1964, a *New York Herald-Tribune* reporter described 14 provinces as being "virtually governed by the Communists." They included Long An and Binh Duong, which are about as close to Saigon as New Jersey and Connecticut are to New York City.[49]

Two years later, the NLF had liberated about three-quarters of South Vietnam. Only the large towns and provincial capitals remained under the Saigon regime—plus some of the main roads and a diminishing handful of fortified villages. Even in Saigon, the Liberation Armed Forces were able to carry out armed attacks against American-occupied installations and South Vietnamese police posts. The cities, furthermore, were the location of periodic strikes, riots and demonstrations which often tied the hands of whatever government was in power at the time.

How was this poorly armed guerrilla movement able to drive a numerically superior military force—three times as large, better equipped and better paid—from most of South Vietnam's territory? The essential factor was the support given to the NLF by the overwhelming majority of the population. Not only did this provide the NLF with an inexhaustible source of recruits—many of whom came over from the South Vietnamese army, together with their weapons and training—but it provided the guerrillas with a constant supply of accurate information about the movements and weaknesses of the enemy. At the same time the U.S. and Saigon forces—while collecting food and taxes, and drafting soldiers, by force—found themselves unable to obtain the

[49] Beverly Deepe, "'McNamara's Headache'—14 Viet Provinces," *New York Herald Tribune,* May 24, 1964.

same sort of information about the "Viet Cong." Wrote the London *Economist*:

> The most serious military shortage is of information—accurate information—about the Vietcong. Normally where the conflicting sides are the same people speaking the same language there is a good two-way intelligence system. But this does not operate in Vietnam, although it is obvious that the Vietcong rebels have excellent information about South Vietnamese and American activities and plans.[50]

The *New York Times* correspondent Homer Bigart described one battle in the Mekong delta which highlighted the problem faced by the South Vietnamese government troops. This was an NLF ambush which resulted in a serious military defeat for the government forces.

> The ambush occurred on the outskirts of Bentre, a garrison town and on a heavily travelled highway. Yet the guerrillas moved into position in daylight, prepared the ambuscade in full view of the road and waited for three hours for the convoy to appear. They must have been observed by scores of peasants. Yet no one informed the garrison in Bentre. Could this have happened if the peasants felt any real identification with the regime?[51]

What were the reasons for the support given by the people to the National Liberation Front? They were many and diverse. Perhaps most important of all was the fact that the NLF defended the land reform carried out by the Viet Minh during the war with the French. A captured NLF document was translated and published by the U.S. State Department as a mimeographed pamphlet entitled *When the Communists Come . . .*; the text dealt with the efforts made by the NLF to win over the people of one village whose inhabitants were, at first, almost all hostile to communism. Within a few years, so many villagers had been won over that the Diem regime was no longer able to maintain any administrative apparatus there. The crucial factor in the loss of this originally loyal village to the NLF was the land question; government corruption played a secondary role.

[50] "Faulty Line Between Americans and Vietnamese," *Economist*, London, April 17, 1965, p. 285.

[51] Homer Bigart, "Vietnam Victory Remote Despite U.S. Aid to Diem," *New York Times*, July 25, 1962.

Another important cause of the NLF's popularity is the realisation that the price of preserving an anti-communist state in South Vietnam is the continued partition of the Vietnamese nation. Most South Vietnamese are conscious of the fact that so-called "Free Vietnam" is the heir to the French colonial regime, while North Vietnam is the creation of the struggle against the French. All of the North Vietnamese leaders, and many of the leaders of the National Liberation Front, were active in the fight for independence. Diem, on the other hand, spent the war years in exile in Belgium and the United States; General Nguyen Cao Ky, for his part, was a pilot in the French Air Force during the French-Indo-China War. The NLF stands for the reunification of the two zones of Vietnam on the basis of self-determination. Thus, the factor of nationalism, instead of being one of the subjective conditions impeding the growth of revolutionary consciousness, actually encourages it.

A third vital cause of the National Liberation Front's popular appeal is its constant struggle on behalf of democracy. In fact, the NLF's program of December 1960 speaks as much about democracy as about either national reunification or social reform.[52] Trade union rights, ethnic minority group rights and freedom from religious discrimination are particularly important planks in the platform.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the outcome of an NLF victory would mean the establishment of a bourgeois democracy. Under the French colonial regime, and under the Diem regime which opposed any policy of industrialisation, no South Vietnamese bourgeoisie came into existence—with the exception of the comprador class, which included a large percentage of Chinese aliens. Bourgeois democracy is simply not a form of government which can exist for any length of time in a country without a bourgeoisie; under such circumstances, bourgeois democracy will either degenerate into a new form of reactionary dictatorship (as in Indonesia or Bolivia), develop into socialism (as in Cuba), or be overthrown (as in Brazil or Nigeria).

What determines the course that bourgeois democratic revolutions take in semi-colonial countries is which class controls

[52] The program is reprinted in Herbert Aptheker, *Mission to Hanoi*, New York, 1966, pp. 99–106.

the armed forces. When professional armies are left intact, they generally tend to side with the most conservative forces in the revolutionary movement, and at some point turn away from revolution and suppress the left. When professional armies, however, are replaced with revolutionary armies or militias, the probability is that the revolution will soon pass from its bourgeois democratic first stage into a socialist second stage. In South Vietnam, the political organisation representing the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and revolutionary intellectuals has retained control over the military arm of the revolutionary movement. Furthermore, the majority of members of the Liberation Armed Forces are militiamen, who farm by day and fight by night. This is in contrast with Algeria, where the FLN created a professional army in exile; this army eventually took over the country in order to halt the march towards socialism.

One should therefore not be misled by the disclaimers of some of the NLF leaders to the effect that the goal of the Front is nothing more than the elimination of American imperialism and the overthrow of the puppet regime. At the same time, one should not overlook the distinction between the first and second stages of the South Vietnamese revolution.[53] From a peasant-based movement with nonsocialist goals, the National Liberation Front is most likely to develop into the instrument for the socialist transformation of South Vietnam.

Following the "loss" of Cuba by the "free world," there was a reappraisal of American foreign policy vis-à-vis revolutionary movements in the semi-colonial countries. It was evident that reliance on military and economic aid to "anti-communist" regimes would, by itself, not suffice to halt the erosion of the capitalist zone of the world. The American ruling circles devised a strategy for the "containment" of "communist expansion" which assumed that Soviet and Chinese intervention on behalf of revolutionary movements would be kept to a minimum by means of nuclear blackmail. This new strategy was implemented at the outset of the Kennedy administration.

The strategy envisaged three stages, as it were, in the con-

[53] As does Adolfo Gilly, "Vietnam: A War of the Masses and a Socialist Revolution," *Monthly Review*, New York, December 1965.

tainment of revolution. In the first stage, United States commitment would be limited to the military aid programmes which already existed under Eisenhower. The second stage was "counterinsurgency," to be used in case the first stage failed; in this stage, American troops as well as American money were to be used to suppress revolutionary movements. Given the failure of the second stage, the third stage, known as "limited war," would be entered upon; here, the American strategists envisaged a Korean-type situation in which there would be open conflict between American troops and the armed forces of one or more nations of the socialist camp.

In South Vietnam, the United States entered the first stage even during the French-Indo-China War (although the U.S. aid to the French was, of course, not then conceived of as the "first stage" in a perpetually expanding American commitment). US assistance to the anti-Communist forces in Vietnam grew during the years of the Diem regime, so that in May 1961 the *New York Times* could report: "United States authorities estimate that American military aid already covers 80 per cent of South Vietnam's defense budget. In addition, economic assistance has totalled more than $1,300,000,000 since."[54]

In that month, the first of a long series of high-level official visits to Saigon took place. On the 12th, Vice-President Johnson met with Diem, pledging the latter increased military aid. Wrote the *New York Times* on May 12, 1961: "Among measures which Mr. Johnson did not announce, but which were reported by informed sources, is an expansion of the United States Military Advisory Group to about 1,650 men." The Geneva accords had prohibited the use of more than 650 foreign advisers by either half of Vietnam.

The year 1961 marked the beginning of the "counter-insurgency" effort in South Vietnam. The American scheme to crush the "Viet Cong" was based on the experiences of the British in Malaya where they fought against "communist terrorists." What the American strategists ignored about the British experiences in Malaya proved to be more important than what they learned.

The Malayan guerrilla movement, first of all, was largely

[54] Robert Trumbull, *New York Times*, May 12, 1961.

limited to the Chinese population, and never made any serious inroads among the Moslem and traditionalist Malays. Of the Chinese, only those who lived in the countryside were—for reasons of physical limitation—able to participate in the armed struggle. Most Chinese in Malaya lived in the cities; the ones who lived in the countryside were "squatters," who had moved there during the Japanese occupation. The Bristish concentrated these people in "New Villages," managing to separate the guerrillas from their supporters. Thus, using a total of 300,000 troops (Malayan, British, Australian, New Zealand, Gurkha and African), the British suppressed about 8,000–12,000 communists in roughly fourteen years.

Obtaining the same numerical superiority over the "Viet Cong" did not look difficult for the United States in 1961, since there were only about 10,000 guerrillas. What proved to be the big stumbling block was the fact that, unlike the situation in Malaya, the large majority of the peasants in South Vietnam were supporters of the guerrillas.

Nevertheless, the American and South Vietnamese governments went ahead with a resettlement program, in the hope of concentrating the peasants in "strategic hamlets." This program was, to put it mildly, less than successful. David Arnold, a former officer in the U.S. Information Agency in South Vietnam, reported:

> Both Americans and Vietnamese were taking the strategic hamlet program seriously and were hailing it as the turning point in the struggle against the Viet Cong. I visited strategic hamlets in the Mekong Delta every day and saw differently. Fortified villages in Malaya probably did win the war. The British, through means never revealed to Parliament, managed to separate the Communist from the non-Communist before enclosing the village with a wall. The Vietnamese did not. Anyone could live in the strategic hamlet if he said he wanted to or could be forced to. In Malaya the walls were twelve feet high, the gates were closed at sundown, and anyone found outside the walls was shot on the spot, no questions asked. In the Delta, some walls managed to rise to three feet, and for the peasants who couldn't be bothered with stepping over them, the gates were always kept open. In Malaya, the inhabitants were kept armed, to ward off guerrilla attacks. In South Vietnam, weapons were kept locked in the hamlet chief's office and distributed in emergencies. Emergencies managed to come too

fast for effective distribution. In Malaya, the Communists were effectively cut off from the peasants. In Vietnam, the flow of propaganda, terror, food and information continued unhindered.[55]

Acting as adviser to the South Vietnamese government on the question of the strategic hamlets was Robert Thompson, an Englishman who had served in a key capacity in Malaya during the war against the "communist terrorists." Thompson's advice was to build the hamlets in those areas which were relatively secure from the NLF. Ngo Dinh Nhu, on the other hand, was more inclined to concentrate on those areas which were least secure. Nhu had his way. Wrote Denis Warner:

> Instead of going slowly, South Vietnam went into mass production. Instead of concentrating on white (or Viet Cong-free) areas, the government went for the red (or Viet Cong-dominated). Operation Sunrise, which was intended to separate the Maquis D, the Viet Cong's main base in the rubber, jungle and swamps immediately north of Saigon from the capital, and the Maquis D itself from the Cambodian border, by the resettlement of the peasants, was almost Operation Sunset for the strategic hamlet concept. Without warning, preparation or consent, peasants saw their homes, and often their belongings, burned behind them. They were uprooted at bayonet point and planted down in new areas which had not been prepared to receive them. . . . To add to their misfortunes, the villagers were not settled in their own localities, but were often moved considerable distances. This meant that they lost not only their homes but also their land.[56]

The effect of the strategic hamlet program was the opposite of what the strategists of " counterinsurgency" had expected it to be. Fearing the sort of "resettlement" described by Warner, the peasants would flee whenever government troops approached. The hamlets themselves could not be defended effectively against the Liberation Armed Forces, inhabited, as they were, by people who sympathised with the NLF. One by one, the "strategic hamlets" fell to the guerrillas; some were transformed into NLF fortresses, some were destroyed by their inhabitants. The arms with which the hamlets were to have been defended became the

[55] David Arnold, "Vietnam, Symptom of a World Malaise," Fellowship of Reconciliation, May 1964.

[56] Denis Warner, *The Last Confucian*, New York, 1963, pp. 34–35.

property of the Liberation Armed Forces. After the fall of Diem, the "strategic hamlet" program was abandoned.

Side by side with the attempted resettlement of the peasants went the collective punishment of all those who escaped or resisted. In the "red" areas, which were under NLF control, everything that moved was considered an enemy. Government troops were permitted, as a matter of policy, to loot all villages which they temporarily occupied in "red" areas. Later, the Americans adopted the tactic of burning these villages to the ground, destroying everything in them, from cooking utensils to fruit trees. Where ground troops could not reach, aeroplanes bombed the defenceless villages with napalm. Rice fields were sprayed with special chemicals—a variety of weed-killer—which poisoned the crops. Whenever American troops captured NLF guerrillas, they turned them over to South Vietnamese government forces, who either killed the prisoners outright or tortured them for information. In the name of "protecting freedom," of "halting aggression," and of "opposing tyranny," the United States was conducting a campaign of genocidal nature against the political movement which had the support of the majority of the South Vietnamese people. . . .

10

Munich, Dominos, and Containment

Howard Zinn

At what point deception turns into self-deception is impossible to say, and so it seems pointless to try to reconstruct the "intent" or the "sincerity" of officials (in any of the world's governments) or to say how *consciously* they are thinking and moving along a certain line. Each single act in a series may be clearly conscious, while the total direction of the behavior is only vaguely sensed. When an outsider reconstructs the "thinking" of statesmen as forming a certain pattern, he is imposing an order which is rarely preconceived, and yet may be enormously important in its implications. With this warning, I want to speculate a bit on the psychological origin of the "Munich analogy" used by the President and others to justify the United States military action in Vietnam.

The analogy comes first, I would suggest, out of a need to pile up more and more reasons to persuade the public, because it is evident that the public has been in great need of persuasion. (This administration watches the polls closely; in September 1966, the Harris Poll showed that less than half the population approved Johnson's handling of the Vietnam war.) The various reasons given for the Vietnam war partly overlap, are partly distinct—saving freedom in South Vietnam, fighting aggression, stopping Communism. If one doesn't quite persuade, the speaker moves on to the next one. The supposition is that three unconvincing arguments may add up to one strong one.

Each succeeding argument comes closer and closer to what postwar history shows to be the core principle of United States foreign policy: that somehow, we must "stop Communism." This

From Howard Zinn, *Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, pp. 83–94, 96–103.

belief is not questioned or examined; it has become a matter of faith. It does not come from a rational study of Communism in its complexities and contradictions, its changes over time, its move from monolith to bipolarity to multipolarity. It is not informed by the work on Communism produced by the nation's scholars. We have here a reflex action, conditioned over a long period of time, so that any warning of "Communism," however faint or uncertain, brings a violent response. (An Ambassador sends an urgent dispatch from Santo Domingo saying that "Communists"—who later turned out to be largely mythical—are about to take over the government, and the Marines are on their way.)

It is part of the psychology of collective man or, as Niebuhr put it, of "immoral society," which insists on drawing chalk lines on the globe to separate good and bad, friend and foe, failing to recognize that no such geopolitical division can do justice to the complexity of good and evil in the world. It is George Orwell's *Animal Farm,* where "everyone on two legs is our enemy; everyone on four legs is our friend." It is almost exactly the psychology of Colonel Cathcart in *Catch-22,* where everything that happened in the world was measured by a simple test: "Will this give me a black eye, or will it put a feather in my cap?" Our national leaders now have the habit of judging every international development this way: Will it spread Communism, or stop it?

There is one American official who has understood this psychology, but his advice goes unheeded. George Kennan wrote in *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin:*

> There is, let me assure you, nothing in nature more egocentrical than the embattled democracy. It soon becomes the victim of its own war propaganda. It then tends to attach to its own cause an absolute value which distorts its own vision on everything else. Its enemy becomes the embodiment of all evil. Its own side, on the other hand, is the center of all virtue. The contest comes to be viewed as having a final, apocalyptic quality. If we lose, all is lost; life will no longer be worth living; there will be nothing to be salvaged. If we win, then everything will be possible; all problems will become soluble; the one great source of evil—*our* enemy—will have been crushed; the forces of good will then sweep forward unimpeded; all worthy aspirations will be satisfied.

The leaders of the United States have worked themselves and the citizenry of the country into this apocalyptic view of world affairs: If Vietnam goes Communist, all is lost—if not now, soon. Yet the facts of Vietnam, the pictures on television, the growing criticism by respected public figures, have for the first time since World War II created some doubts. An effort involving hundreds of thousands of soldiers and billions of dollars needs powerful, unquestionable reasons, and these are hard to find in the visible facts of the Vietnam case.

But there is at hand a one-piece substitute that comes prefabricated with its own rationale, surrounded by an emotional aura strong enough to ward off inspectors. This is the Munich analogy which, transplanted to Vietnam, speaks with all the passion of Churchill in the Battle of Britain, declaring that to surrender in Vietnam is to do what Chamberlain did at Munich —that is why the villagers must die. As Johnson said (July 28, 1965):

> If we are driven from the field in Vietnam, then no nation can ever again have the same confidence in American promises, or in American protection. In each land, the forces of independence would be considerably weakened. And an Asia so threatened by Communist domination would imperil the security of the United States itself. . . .
>
> We learned from Hitler at Munich that success only feeds the appetite of aggression. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another, bringing with it perhaps even larger and crueler conflict. . . .

One of the great values of the Munich analogy to the Strangeloves is that it captures so much of the American political spectrum for the cause. It backs the Vietnamese expedition with a coalition broad enough to include Republican Barry Goldwater, Democrat Lyndon Johnson, labor leader Meany, and John Roche of the ADA (thus reversing World War II's coalition, which excluded the far right and included the radical left). This bloc justifies the carnage in Vietnam with a huge image (carried over from old newsreels) of invading armies—making only one small change in the subtitle: the replacement of the word "Fascist" with the word "Communist." By this simple transplant, the whole savage arsenal of World War II—the

means both justified and unjustifiable—supported by that great fund of indignation built against the Nazis, can be turned to fresh uses.

We should recall what happened at Munich: Chamberlain of England and Daladier of France met Hitler and Mussolini (this was September 30, 1938) and agreed to surrender the Sudeten part of Czechoslovakia, inhabited by German-speaking people, hoping thus to prevent a general war in Europe. Chamberlain returned to England, claiming he had brought "peace in our time." Six months later, Hitler had gobbled up the rest of Czechoslovakia; then he began presenting ultimatums to Poland; and by September 3, 1939, general war had broken out in Europe.

There is strong evidence that if the Sudetenland had not been surrendered at Munich—with it went Czechoslovakia's powerful fortifications, 70 percent of its iron, steel, and electric power, 86 percent of its chemicals, 66 percent of its coal—and that if Hitler had then gone to war, he would have been defeated quickly with the aid of Czechoslovakia's 35 well-trained divisions. And if he chose at the sign of resistance not to go to war, then at least, he would have been stopped in his expansion.

And so, the analogy continues, to let the Communist-dominated National Liberation Front win in South Vietnam is to encourage more Communist expansion in Southeast Asia and beyond, and perhaps lead to a war more disastrous than the present one; to stop Communism in South Vietnam is to discourage its expansion elsewhere.

We should note, first, some of the important differences between the Munich situation in 1938 and Vietnam today:

1. In 1938, the main force operating against the Czech *status quo* was an outside force, Hitler's Germany; the supporting force was the Sudeten group inside led by Konrad Henlein. Since 1958 (and traceable back to 1942), the major force operating against the *status quo* in South Vietnam has been an inside force, formed in 1960 into the NLF; the chief supporter is not an outside nation but another part of the same nation, North Vietnam. The largest outside force in Vietnam consists of the

American troops. To put it another way, in 1938, the Germans were trying to take over part of another country. Today, the Vietcong are trying to take over part of their own country. In 1938, the outsider was Germany. Today it is the United States.

2. The Czech government, whose interests the West surrendered to Hitler in 1938, was a strong, effective, prosperous, democratic government—the government of Benes and Masaryk. The South Vietnamese government which we support is a hollow shell of a government, unstable, unpopular, corrupt, a dictatorship of bullies and torturers, disdainful of free elections and representative government. They first opposed establishing a National Assembly on the ground that it might lead to Communism, and then held a totalitarian-type election controlled wholly by the government, headed by a long line of tyrants from Bao Dai to Diem to Ky, who no more deserve to be ranked with Benes and Masaryk than Governor Wallace of Alabama deserves to be compared to Albert Schweitzer. It is a government whose perpetuation is not worth the loss of a single human life.
3. Standing firm in 1938 meant engaging, in order to defeat once and for all, the central threat of that time, Hitler's Germany. Fighting in Vietnam today, even if it brings total victory, does not at all engage what the United States considers the central foes—the Soviet Union and Communist China. Even if international Communism *were* a single dangerous organism, to annihilate the Vietcong would be merely to remove a toenail from an elephant. To engage what the United States thinks is the source of its difficulties (Red China one day, Soviet Russia the next) would require nuclear war.
4. We have twenty years of cold-war history to test the proposition derived from the Munich analogy—that a firm stand in Vietnam is worth the huge loss of life, because it will persuade the Communists there must be no more uprisings elsewhere. But what effect did our refusal to allow the defeat of South Korea (1950–53) or our aid in suppressing the Huk rebellion in the Philippines (1947–

> 55) or the suppression of guerrillas in Malaya (1948–60) have on the guerrilla warfare in South Vietnam which started around 1958 and became consolidated under the National Liberation Front in 1960? If our use of subversion and arms to overthrow Guatemala in 1954 showed the Communists in Latin America that we meant business, then how did it happen that Castro rebelled and won in 1959? Did our invasion of Cuba in 1961, our blockade in 1962, show other revolutionaries in Latin America that they must desist? Then how explain the Dominican uprising in 1965? And did our dispatch of Marines to Santo Domingo end the fighting of guerrillas in the mountains of Peru?

One touches the Munich analogy and it falls apart.

The "domino theory" is another version of a similar idea. It was enunciated as early as April 7, 1954 by President Eisenhower at a press conference: "The loss of Indochina will cause the fall of Southeast Asia like a set of dominos." It was put in more sophisticated and scholarly form by Robert Scalapino (at the Washington Teach-In, 1965), who preferred to see it as a game of checkers, with China doing the jumping. (Others might call the game Monopoly and put the onus on the United States; my own temptation is to call the whole business Russian roulette.) Scalapino said:

> It seems to me clear that the arguments against American withdrawal are so powerful that they have not been answered, at least as yet. It is not merely that withdrawal would reduce American credibility with her allies and the neutrals around the world. It is also that a green light would be given to the new Communist-dominated National Liberation Movements even now getting underway. . . .
>
> American imperialism, asserts Peking, is a paper tiger. . . . American withdrawal from Viet-Nam would prove the Peking thesis correct, and make it virtually impossible for moderation to prevail within the Communist world. If the strategy of pushing America and forcing it into unilateral retreat works in Viet-Nam, it will work elsewhere and be tried everywhere. . . . Peking . . . will move to those areas where she can combine the ingredients necessary for her revolutionary formula.

Scalapino puts the burden of proof on the advocates of withdrawal ("the arguments . . . have not been answered"); it is a curious reversal of the rules of evidence in civilized jurisprudence to say that someone under attack must present proof to show why the attacker must stop! Surely, it is the other way around. Not only must the United States prove why it must continue its ferocious assault on Vietnam, but the scale of violence demands that it prove this beyond a reasonable doubt. We demand unanimity among twelve citizens before we will condemn a single person to death, but we will destroy thousands of people on a supposition as fragile as Eisenhower's dominos or Scalapino's checkers.

There is a good reason why the "domino theory" is the last line of defense for the Vietnam hawks, and why they put the burden of *disproving* it on their critics, while the bombs continue to fall. This is because the domino theory rests on suppositions about the future, which are impossible to prove *conclusively* one way or the other. It is like saying: I will not stop shooting at the fellow next door and his family until you can *assure* me that he does not plan to burn my house down. No one can say with any high degree of certainty *what* will happen if Vietnam goes Communist, or what will happen if the Vietcong are totally destroyed.

It is hard enough to say what will happen in Vietnam; but to say that certain consequences in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are inevitable is absurd. International affairs are complex, and predictions are extremely unreliable. Who would have predicted the Tito break with Stalin, or destalinization in the Soviet Union, or the Sino-Soviet split, or a Cuban socialist state, or the quick overthrow of Nkrumah in Ghana and Sukarno in Indonesia, or the American-Soviet detente, or a dozen other major events? To be willing to commit huge numbers of people to death on a supposition about the future of world affairs is an incredible arrogance and a cruelty beyond words. It also means we have taken over that doctrine which once horrified the humane liberals of this country: the doctrine of *preventive war.*

However, such a feat of prognostication becomes credible if we can locate one central body with both the power and the desire to execute a predicted series of evil acts. Scholars sometimes refer to this as the "devil theory" of history. Such a theory is simple, and inclusive, and is capable of mobilizing enormous

fanaticism to the service of retribution. The "infidels" spurred the Crusades, "witches" brought the burnings and hangings of the Middle Ages, the Jews sent Germany into frenzies. In each case the accused were held responsible for all that was wrong, and their extinction was to bring glory and peace. In each case there could be no faltering; the hangman and machine-gun squad could not wait, because at the slightest sign of weakness the flood would engulf all.

Richard Hofstadter, in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics,* writes of "the central preconception of the paranoid style —the existence of a vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetrate acts of the most fiendish character." Not long ago, the center of the conspiracy was Russia. Today, the devil is Communist China. A political scientist doing strategic research for the government told me one day in 1965, with complete calm, that his institute had decided they were completely wrong about the premise which underlay much of American policy in the postwar period —the premise that Russia hoped to take over Western Europe by force. Do we have any more evidence now to support our predictions about China than we had then about Russia?

Paranoia starts from a base of facts, but then leaps wildly to a conclusion. It is a fact that China is totalitarian in its limitation of free expression and fierce in its verbal assaults on the United States, that it crushed opposition in Tibet and fought for a strip of disputed territory on the Indian border. But again we are looking at a set of data in isolation.

Let's consider *India* briefly: It crushed an uprising in Hyderabad, initiated attacks on the China border, took Goa by force, and is fanatical in its insistence on Kashmir.

Are the Chinese behaving any more aggressively than most new nations (or old nations with new social systems)? They are, in fact, behaving *less* aggressively than did the United States in its early years, when it forced its way into Florida, made war with Mexico, even threatened Canada. Recall, too, the powerful concern of all new nations with security from attack: The United States after the Revolutionary War felt continually threatened by British outposts on its northwest frontiers and by the British Navy in the Atlantic; the resulting tension had a great deal to do with

the War of 1812. Most scholarly observers of Communist China's behavior agree that its actions are *defensive* and that its talk about the atomic bomb being a "paper tiger" is not at all a threat, but an exclamation of defiance against the possibility that China would be attacked by American atomic power.

Take the following UPI dispatch of May 12, 1966: "Administration officials acknowledged Wednesday that the United States had rejected a Communist Chinese bid for an exchange of pledges that neither would be the first to use nuclear weapons against the other." How should the Chinese interpret that? How should they interpret this headline in *The New York Times of* October 23, 1964? "Washington Bars Any New Parley with China's Reds. Terms Peking's Suggestion for Nuclear Conference a 'Sucker' Proposal."

Is it not significant that China, which moved into North Korea when United States troops during the war approached its border, pulled its soldiers completely out of Korea after the truce was signed, unlike the United States? Or that China engaged Indian troops in the Himalayas only after being attacked in 1962, pushed the Indians almost to the plains of Assam, and then, with overwhelming power and a clear road ahead, declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew to what they had said was the correct boundary? How does one reconcile China's tolerance of the British nonmilitary control of a Chinese city (Hong Kong), and Portuguese control of another Chinese city (Macao) and their peaceful settlement of border problems with Pakistan, Burma, Nepal, Mongolia, with their fierce reaction to the Chiang-United States base on Taiwan? Does this not suggest that their chief concern is the perennial concern of new nations—physical security? And that they react with either ferocity or tolerance depending on whether a nation is threatening this security?

China, which is buffered by mountains and deserts on the west, traditionally made contact with the rest of the world via the Pacific Ocean. In mid-1966, China, on its Pacific side, faced a sweeping arc of enormous American military power from north to south: 40,000 troops in Japan; 60,000 in Korea; 50,000 on Guam and Okinawa; 50,000 on Formosa; 40,000 in the Philippines; 25,000 in Thailand; 50,000 in the Seventh Fleet; 300,000 in South Vietnam.

In early 1954, Walter S. Robertson, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, testified to a House Appropriations Committee on United States policy toward China, and his testimony was summarized by a member of the committee, with Robertson's approval, as follows:

> The heart of the present policy toward China and Formosa is that there is to be kept alive a constant threat of military action vis-à-vis Red China in the hope that at some point there will be an internal breakdown. . . . In other words, a cold war waged under the leadership of the U.S., with constant threat of attack against Red China, led by Formosa and other Far Eastern groups and militarily supported by the United States.

The United States has never repudiated that idea, and while it does not repeat it publicly, its actions speak quite clearly to the Chinese.

Certainly other Asian non-Communist countries should be concerned about the "threat" of Communist China if it is real. And while there is the normal concern of any small nation lest any neighboring large nation encroach on its independence, there is nothing like our hysteria (except for those like Chiang Kai-shek, whose regimes are kept alive by our money and arms). In early 1966, Alec Campbell, editor of *The New Republic* (a magazine sympathetic to the Johnson administration until the Vietnam escalation), toured the Far East. Hubert Humphrey had said on March 3, 1966, that "most Asian leaders are concerned about the belligerence and militancy of Communist China's attitudes." Campbell said in response, "I can find little evidence of their concern." He summed up his findings:

> Most Asians would like to see this country use its superior strength to quiet Chinese fears, not aggravate them; be big enough to overlook China's bad Communist habit of cursing and swearing; and seek through patience and courtesy an understanding with China such as we now seem to have reached with Russia.

As for our European allies, C. P. Fitzgerald, the English sinologist, puts it tersely in his book *Revolution in China*. "In fact, the Europeans accept the Chinese revolution as final, the Americans do not."

The American public at large has not followed the details of Chinese and United States policy in Asia in the past twenty years. It does read the headlines in the newspapers which keep pointing out that the Chinese *say* they are going to take over the world. But do they? Or is it another of these cases where eager reporters and politicians have substituted their own simple theory for one too elusive to be newsworthy?

Marxist theory itself gives no support to the notion of building a Communist world through outside aggression. With Marx, the internal contradictions of the capitalist system within each country would lead to social change; with Lenin, the especially sharp contradictions of world imperialism would bring uprisings in the colonial areas of the world; Stalin in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* (written at the end of World War II) continued to stress that the contradictions of imperialism would bring change. George Kennan has written:

> Central to the Soviet view of how socialism was to triumph on a world scale has always been the operation of social and political forces within the capitalist countries . . . it has never regarded action by its own forces as the main agency for the spread of world revolution. . . . In the course of the last twenty years, I have labored many hours to explain to other Americans the nature of the Soviet threat as I saw it; in no respect have I found it so difficult to obtain understanding as in the presentation of this one simple fact.

Communist China, through all of her ideological disputation with the Soviet Union, has never departed from the idea that she agreed to in the Moscow Declaration of 1960, that Socialism "cannot be imposed from without."

There is, of course, Lin Piao's famous statement "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," written in 1965, which suffered the natural history of important documents: distortion in the mass media reaching millions, correction in the scholarly journals reaching thousands. What was held up before the public as a "blueprint of world conquest" turned out on closer inspection to be the usual Communist prediction that one day the world would be Communist, coupled with an exhortation to "Adhere to the Policy of Self-Reliance." The Chinese, Lin pointed out, had conducted their revolution "without any material aid from outside,"

and while people of the world should support one another against imperialism, "foreign aid can only play a supplementary role." Lin wrote:

> In order to make a revolution and to fight a people's war and be victorious, it is imperative to adhere to the policy of self-reliance, rely on the strength of the masses in one's own country and prepare to carry on the fight independently even when all material aid from outside is cut off. . . .

Much of the discussion on Vietnam has centered on the question of whether we can "win" in Vietnam. A more pertinent question is whether we *should* win, in the sense of a military victory. "Victory" for the United States in the cold war has too often meant the maintenance of a repressive oligarchy in power, ignoring the needs of the population, and holding on by its teeth to a brass ring held by an American general.

Korea is one example. There we "won" in the sense that we prevented the North Koreans from forcibly unifying the country. But the cost of Korea in human terms was frightful. General O'Donnell, head of the Bomber Command in the Far East: "I would say that the entire, almost the entire Korean peninsula is just a terrible mess. Everything is destroyed. There is nothing standing worthy of the name." Napalm was poured onto villages. (*Time* magazine, counting South Korea's losses after the war—400,000 civilians killed, 100,000 children made orphans—added this characteristic sentence: "But out of disaster has grown a tough army of 16 divisions, and a sense of manhood.") And what was the result? A series of *junta* dictatorships, the end of political democracy, 25 percent unemployment in 1960, and 40 percent of the farm families with less than an acre of land.

The tragic story was summed up in 1961 by Harvard's expert on Korea, Edward W. Wagner ("Failure in Korea," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1961), who noted that 70,000 Korean residents in Japan chose repatriation to North Korea where a Communist government, with serious deficiencies in political freedom, was nevertheless making rapid economic progress, improving the general standard of living, and so offered "the better hope for the future."

What did the Korean nightmare of horrors accomplish? It "showed the Communists," as politicians and others kept repeating, that "we mean business." But six years later, revolutionaries under Castro took over in Cuba. Seven years later, the National Liberation Front was formed in Vietnam, and today 40,000 Koreans are fighting *there.*

Two premises of the domino theory deserve to be reexamined. One is that we should be concerned about the maintenance of American military bases near Vietnam, in Southeast Asia, and in the Pacific area in general. The United States armed forces do not really "protect" any nation; only a nation whose stability and strength come from its own resources can really maintain its independence, and the presence of foreign forces undermines that stability and saps that strength.

We ought to say firmly what many Americans, even those disturbed by the Vietnam war, have been too timorous to say, that American military forces do not belong in Southeast Asia or anywhere in Asia at all (indeed, that *no* nation in the world should have troops or bases anywhere outside its borders). Are such bases necessary to "national security"? Again, we have become victims of a phrase repeated so often that it becomes unquestioned. Are we to seriously believe that China—or anybody —will attack the United States? Our bases in Asia do nothing to protect America. But they do keep unpopular regimes in power; they threaten China and thus perpetuate hostility between two huge nations which have no reason to be in conflict with one another.

The other unexamined premise in the domino theory is that it is necessarily bad for revolutions to take place in other parts of Asia. If a victory for Communism in Vietnam is followed by upheavals in other Asian countries where conditions demand change, why should we object? And why should we assume that these upheavals will be the result of the "domino" effect rather than of the strivings for betterment that people have shown everywhere since human society was formed? We seem unable to believe that hunger, homelessness, oppression are sufficient spurs to revolution, without plotting from the outside.

So Communism and revolution require discussion. They are

basic to that inversion of morality which enables the United States to surround the dirty war in Vietnam with the righteous glow of the war against Hitler.

A key assumption in this inversion is that Communism and Nazism are sufficiently identical to be treated alike. However, Communism as a set of ideals has attracted good people—not racists, or bullies, or militarists—all over the world. One may argue that in Communist countries citizens had better affirm their allegiance to it, but that doesn't account for the fact that millions in France, Italy, and Indonesia have been Communist party members, that countless others all over the world have been inspired by Marxian ideals. And why should they not? These ideals include peace, brotherhood, racial equality, the classless society, the withering away of the state.

True, the Communists behave much better out of power than in it. However, that is a commentary not on their ideals but on weaknesses which they share with non-Communist wielders of power. If, presumably in pursuit of their ideals, they have resorted to brutal tactics, maintained suffocating bureaucracies and rigid dogmas, that makes them about as reprehensible as other nations, other social systems, which—while boasting of the Judeo-Christian heritage—have fostered war, exploitation, colonialism, and race hatred. We judge ourselves by our ideals, others by their actions. It is a great convenience.

The ultimate values of the Nazis, let us recall, included racism, elitism, militarism, and war as ends in themselves. Unlike either the Communist nations or the capitalist democracies, there is here no ground for appeal to higher purposes. The ideological basis for coexistence between Communist and capitalist nations is the rough consensus of ultimate goals which they share. While war is held off, the citizens on both sides—and this is beginning to occur—will increasingly insist that their leaders live up to these values.

One of these professed values—which the United States is trying with difficulty to conceal by fragile arguments and feeble analogies—is the self-determination of peoples. Self-determination justifies the overthrow of entrenched oligarchies, whether foreign or domestic, in ways that will not lead to general war. China, Egypt, Indonesia, Algeria, and Cuba are examples. Such

revolutions tend to set up dictatorships, but they do so in the name of values which can be used to erode those same dictatorships. They therefore deserve as much general support and specific criticism as did the American revolutionaries, who set up a pro-slavery government—but with a commitment to freedom which later led the nation *against its wishes,* to abolitionism.

The easy use of the term "totalitarian" to cover both Nazis and Communists, or to equate the South Vietnamese regime with that of Ho Chi Minh, fails to make important distinctions, just as dogmatists of the left sometimes fail to distinguish between Fascist states and capitalist democracies.

This is ahistorical on two counts. First, it ignores the fact that, for the swift economic progress needed by new nations today, a Communist-led regime does an effective job (though it is not the only type of new government that can). In doing so, it raises educational and living standards, and thus paves the way (as the USSR and Eastern Europe already show) for attacks from within on its own thought-control system. Second, one forgets that the United States and Western Europe, now haughty in prosperity, with a fair degree of free expression, built their present status on the backs of either slaves or colonial people, and subjected their own laboring populations to several generations of misery before beginning to look like welfare states.

The perspective of history suggests that a united Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh is preferable to the elitist dictatorship of the South, just as Maoist China with all its faults is preferable to the rule of Chiang, and Castro's Cuba to Batista's. We do not have pure choices in the present, although we should never surrender those values which can shape the future. Right now, for Vietnam, a Communist government is probably the best avenue available to that whole packet of human values which make up the common morality of mankind today; the preservation of human life, self-determination, economic security, the end of race and class oppression, and that freedom of speech and press which an educated population begins to demand.

In the debate on Vietnam, there has been little or no discussion on exactly what would be the evil consequences of a united Communist Vietnam. It has become an article of faith that what is good or bad in international relations is a matter of counting

up the countries that are on the Communist side, and the number that are on our side. There is the black eye, and there is the feather in the cap. And the difference is worth a mountain of corpses.

We need to get accustomed to the idea that there will be more Communist countries in the world, and that this is not necessarily bad. The physical security of the United States is not diminished by that fact in itself; Communist nations in their international affairs behave very much like other nations (this is why they are so often disappointing to their sympathizers); some are friendly, some are hostile. Each is a unique resultant of Marxist theory and local conditions. The more there are, the greater diversity there will be among them. It is several years now since scholars in the field of Communist studies began taking note of "polycentrism," but American officials still often act as if there were one Communist center in the world.

One thing we should have learned by now is that Communist nations are as prone to the emotion of nationalism as other nations; they crave independence and resist domination by *any* other nation, whether capitalist or Communist. What this means is that a small but effective Communist nation which is neighbor to a large one can guard its independence far better than a non-Communist, semifeudal dictatorship. A Communist Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh can be expected to retain its independence as surely as Tito has maintained his.

The idea of "containment" has always been ambiguous: Is it our aim to contain China, or to contain Communism? And if it is *both,* then what do we do if the two aims turn out to be in conflict with one another?

To base our entire Asian policy on "containing" China is to risk billions of dollars and thousands of lives on the idea that China plans to take over other countries by military expansion —a hypothesis not supported either by her words or by the history of her behavior so far, and one that in the case of the Soviet Union turned out to be false. And to make the hypothesis doubly faulty, it assumes that even if China *wanted* to expand, she could.

But what if China, though not bent on military expansion, is tempted (like all great powers, dictatorial or democratic) to

establish undue influence over some neighboring country simply because a power vacuum has been created there by a weak and unstable regime? If so, would not the most effective deterrent to this be the existence of a relatively strong and stable *Communist* regime in that country? Which is more able to stand on its own feet, to feel secure—the right-wing dictatorship of South Korea, which requires 60,000 United States troops to buttress the government, or the Communist welfare dictatorship of North Korea? In mid-August 1966, North Korea, which has a long border with China and a short border with the Soviet Union, declared her independence of both of them, saying it was "impermissible" for a big Communist party to impose its will on a small one, and that underdeveloped countries must build up an independent national economy or they would be "unable to defend their political independence."

To extend this to Vietnam, would not the purposes both of stability in Asia and the independence of Vietnam be best served by a Communist Vietnam on the border of China? Richard Lowenthal of the Free University of Berlin, the author of *World Communism*, wrote (November 21, 1965) in *The New York Times*:

> In Moscow's view, the Communists are the only solid political force in Vietnam; hence the only hope of limiting Chinese influence in the Indochinese peninsula lies in giving the local Communists a chance to unify the country without prolonging the war, ending their one-sided dependence on Chinese support. I must admit that, in this case, the Soviet analysis seems to me more realistic than the American. . . .

We will probably be safer in a world sprinkled with the likes of Ho Chi Minh, Kim II Sung, and Tito, than with Chiang, Park, and Ky. . . .

11

Counterinsurgency and Genocide

Noam Chomsky

It is important to understand that the massacre of the rural population of Vietnam and their forced evacuation is not an accidental by-product of the war. Rather it is of the very essence of American strategy. The theory behind it has been explained with great clarity and explicitness, for example by Professor Samuel Huntington, Chairman of the Government Department at Harvard and at the time (1968) Chairman of the Council on Vietnamese Studies of the Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group, in effect the State Department task force on Vietnam. Writing in *Foreign Affairs,* he explains that the Viet Cong is "a powerful force which cannot be dislodged from its constituency so long as the constituency continues to exist." The conclusion is obvious, and he does not shrink from it. We can ensure that the constituency ceases to exist by "direct application of mechanical and conventional power . . . on such a massive scale as to produce a massive migration from countryside to city," where the Viet Cong constituency—the rural population—can, it is hoped, be controlled in refugee camps and suburban slums around Saigon.

Technically, the process is known as "urbanization" or "modernization." It is described, with the proper contempt, by Daniel Ellsberg, a Department of Defense consultant on pacification in South Vietnam, who concludes, from his extensive on-the-spot observations, that "we have, of course, demolished the society of Vietnam," that "the bombing of the South has gone on long

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enough to disrupt the society of South Vietnam enormously and probably permanently"; he speaks of the "people who have been driven to Saigon by what Huntington regards as our 'modernizing instruments' in Vietnam, bombs and artillery."[1] Reporters have long been aware of the nature of these tactics, aware that "by now the sheer weight of years of firepower, massive sweeps, and grand forced population shifts have reduced the population base of the NFL . . ."[2] so that conceivably, by brute force, we may still hope to "win."

One thing is clear: so long as an organized social life can be maintained in South Vietnam, the NLF will be a powerful, probably dominant, force. This is the dilemma which has always plagued American policy, and which has made it impossible for us to permit even the most rudimentary democratic institutions in South Vietnam. For these reasons we have been forced to the solution outlined by Professor Huntington: to crush the people's war, we must eliminate the people.

A second thing is tolerably clear: there has been no modification in this policy. Once again, as two years ago, there is mounting popular protest against the war. Once again, a tactical adjustment is being devised that will permit Washington to pursue its dual goal, to pacify the people of South Vietnam while pacifying the American people also. The first of these tasks has not been accomplished too well. The second, to our shame, has been managed quite successfully, for the most part. Now we hear that the burden of fighting the war is to be shifted away from the American infantry to the B-52s and fighter-bombers and a mercenary force of Vietnamese. Only a token force of between 200,000 and 300,000 men, backed by the Pacific Naval and Air command, will be retained, indefinitely, to ensure that the Vietnamese have the right of self-determination.

At a recent press conference, Averell Harriman explained that the North Vietnamese cannot believe that we really intend to abandon the huge military bases we have constructed in Vietnam, such as the one at Cam Ranh Bay (*Village Voice,* Nov. 27).

[1] *No More Vietnams?* For further discussion, see my article in *The New York Review,* Jan. 2, 1969.

[2] Elizabeth Pond, *Christian Science Monitor,* Nov. 8, 1969.

Knowledgeable American observers have found it equally difficult to believe this. For example, as long ago as August 27, 1965, James Reston wrote in the *Times*:

> U.S. bases and supply areas are being constructed on a scale far larger than is necessary to care for the present level of American forces . . . in fact, the U.S. base at Cam Ranh . . . is being developed into another Okinawa, not merely for the purposes of this war, but as a major power complex from which American officials hope a wider alliance of Asian nations, with the help of the U.S., will eventually be able to contain the expansion of China.

The phrase "contain the expansion of China" must be understood as code for the unpronounceable expression: "repress movements for national independence and social reconstruction in Southeast Asia."

Premier Eisaku Sato, in a speech described by American officials as part of a joint Japanese-American policy statement, announced that we are entering a "new Pacific age" in which "a new order will be created by Japan and the United States" (*New York Times,* Nov. 22, 1969). His words, one must assume, were chosen advisedly. To perpetuate this new order we will need military bases such as that at Cam Ranh Bay, which can play the role of the Canal Zone in the Western Hemisphere. There we can base our own forces and train those of our loyal dependencies.

We will no doubt soon proceed to construct an "Inter-Asian" army that can protect helpless governments from their own populations, much as the Brazilians were called in to legitimize our Dominican intervention. Where popular rebellion is in progress, these forces can gain valuable experience. Thus a senior American officer at Camp Bearcat in South Vietnam, where Thai units are based, explains that "they are infusing their army with experience they could never get in their own homeland. . . . They are coordinating their own piece of real estate." And a Thai Colonel adds: "If my country ever has the same subversion, I'll have to fight there. I want to practice here" (*New York Times,* December 3). Surely Reston was right in 1965 in speculating about our long-range plans for the South Vietnamese bases, from which

our "token force" of a quarter of a million men will operate in the Seventies.[3]

Who can complain about a quarter of a million men, a force that can be compared, let us say, with the Japanese army of 160,000 which invaded North China in 1937, in an act of aggression that scandalized the civilized world and set the stage for the Pacific phase of World War II? In fact, counter-insurgency experts like Sir Robert Thompson have long argued that the American forces were far too large to be effective, and have advocated a "low-cost, long-haul strategy" of a sort which will now very likely be adopted by the Nixon administration, if, once again, the American people will trust their leaders and settle into passivity.

As American combat troops are withdrawn, their place, it is hoped, will be taken by a more effective force of Vietnamese—just as Czechoslovakia is controlled, it is reported, by fewer than 100,000 Russian troops. Meanwhile, the war will no doubt be escalated technologically. It will become more "capital intensive."[4] Some of the prospects were revealed in a speech by Chief of Staff William Westmoreland, reported in the *Christian Science Monitor* (October 25–7) under the heading: "Technologically the Vietnam war has been a great success." General Westmoreland "sees machines carrying more and more of the burden." He says:

> I see an army built into and around an integrated area control system that exploits the advanced technology of communications,

[3] On December 10, after this article was written, Reston returned to the question of Cam Ranh Bay, stating that it was now "an air and naval base which is the best in Asia," and that it has been a "fundamental question throughout the Paris negotiations" whether the U.S. is willing to abandon it "and many other modern military bases." He raises the question whether the U.S. would withdraw all troops or only all "combat forces," a plan which "could leave a couple of hundred thousand Americans in Vietnam to maintain and fly the planes and helicopter gunships and continue to train and supply and help direct the Vietnamese."

There is no indication of any serious intention to withdraw all forces or to abandon the bases. As Joseph Kraft has reported the American refusal to commit itself to the principle of complete withdrawal is one of the factors blocking progress in Paris.

[4] In the apt phrase of E. Herman and R. Duboff, "How to coo like a dove while fighting to win," pamphlet of Philadelphia SANE, 20 S. 12th St., Phila. 19107.

> sensors, fire direction, and the required automatic data processing—a system that is sensitive to the dynamics of the ever-changing battlefield—a system that materially assists the tactical commander in making sound and timely decisions.

Further details are presented by Leonard Sullivan, Deputy Director of Research and Development for South East Asian Matters:[5]

> These developments open up some very exciting horizons as to what we can do five or ten years from now: When one realizes that we can detect anything that perspires, moves, carries metal, makes a noise, or is hotter or colder than its surroundings, one begins to see the potential. This is the beginning of instrumentation of the entire battlefield. Eventually, we will be able to tell when anybody shoots, what he is shooting at, and where he was shooting from. You begin to get a "Year 2000" vision of an electronic map with little lights that flash for different kinds of activity. This is what we require for this "porous" war, where the friendly and the enemy are all mixed together.

Note the time scale that is projected for Vietnam. News reports reveal some of the early stages of these exciting developments. The *Times*, November 22, reports a plan to use remote-controlled unmanned aircraft as supply transports for combat areas. On October 1, the *Times* explains that:

> The landscape of Vietnam and the border regions are studded with electronic sensors that beep information into the banks of computers. Radar, cameras, infrared detectors and a growing array of more exotic devices contribute to the mass of information. Not long ago reconnaissance planes began carrying television cameras.

The data go into the Combined Intelligence Center near Tansonnhut Air Base: "Day and night in its antiseptic interior a family of blinking, whirring computers devours, digests and spews out a Gargantuan diet of information about the enemy," the better to serve the "conglomerate of allied civil and military organizations that work together to destroy the Vietcong's under-

[5] *Congressional Record*, Aug. 11, 1969. Cited in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Oct., 1969 (1737 Cambridge St., Cambridge, Mass.—an important journal for those concerned with Asian affairs).

ground government"—freely admitted to have been the most authentic popular social structure in South Vietnam prior to the American effort to demolish the society of Vietnam. One can understand the gloating of Douglas Pike: "The tactics that delivered victory in the Viet Minh war, however impressive once, had been relegated by science to the military history textbook."[6]

What this means is, to put it simply, that we intend to turn the land of Vietnam into an automated murder machine. The techniques of which Westmoreland, Sullivan, and Pike are so proud are, of course, designed for use against a special kind of enemy: one who is too weak to retaliate, whose land can be occupied. These "Year 2000" devices, which Westmoreland describes as a quantum jump in warfare, are fit only for colonial wars. There is surely an element of lunacy in this technocratic nightmare. And if we are still at all capable of honesty, we will, with little difficulty, identify its antecedents.

Our science may yet succeed in bringing to reality the fears of Bernard Fall—no alarmist, and fundamentally in favor of the war during its early years—who wrote in one of his last essays that "Vietnam as a cultural and historic entity . . . is threatened with extinction as the country literally dies under the blows of the largest military machine ever unleashed on an area of this size." The South Vietnamese minister of information wrote in 1968 that ordinary Vietnamese would continue "to be horrified and embittered at the way the Americans fight their war. . . . Our peasants will remember their cratered rice fields and defoliated forests, devastated by an alien air force that seems at war with the very land of Vietnam."[7]

American reporters have told us the same thing so often that

[6] *War, Peace, and the Viet Cong,* MIT, 1969. He estimates that in 1963 "perhaps half the population of South Vietnam at least tacitly supported the NLF." The same estimate was given by the U.S. Mission in 1962. Elsewhere, he has explained that in late 1964 it was impossible to consider an apparently genuine offer of a coalition government, because there was no force that could compete politically with the Viet Cong, with the possible exception of the Buddhists, who were, not long after, suppressed as a political force by Marshal Ky's American-backed storm troopers. The same difficulty has been noted, repeatedly, by spokesmen for the American and Saigon governments and reporters. For some examples, see Herman and Duboff, *op. cit.* or my *American Power and the New Mandarins,* Pantheon, 1969, chapter 3.

[7] *New York Times,* June 11, 1968.

it is almost superfluous to quote. Tom Buckley—to mention only the most recent—describes the delta and the central lowlands:

> . . . bomb craters beyond counting, the dead gray and black fields, forests that have been defoliated and scorched by napalm, land that has been plowed flat to destroy Vietcong hiding places. And everywhere can be seen the piles of ashes forming the outlines of huts and houses, to show where hamlets once stood.[8]

The truth about defoliants is only beginning to emerge, with the discovery that one of the two primary agents used is "potentially dangerous, but needing further study" while the other causes cancer and birth defects, and probably mental retardation. Both will continue to be used in Vietnam against enemy "training and regroupment centers"—i.e., anywhere we please, throughout the countryside.[9]

Of course it may be argued that the American government did not know, in 1961, that these agents were so dangerous. That is true. It was merely an experiment. Virtually nothing was known about what the effects might be. Perhaps there would be no ill effects, or perhaps—at the other extreme—Vietnam would become unfit for human life, or a race of mutants and mental retardates would be created. How could we know, without trying? In such ways "the tactics that delivered victory in the Viet Minh war, however impressive once, had been relegated by science to the military history textbook."

[8] *New York Times Magazine,* November 23, 1969.

[9] See Washington *Post,* Oct. 31; Los Angeles *Times,* Oct. 31; New York *Post,* Nov. 4; *Science,* Nov. 7. A Vietnamese student in the United States, Ngo Vinh Long, has summarized much of what is known, including his personal experience from 1959–1963 when he visited "virtually every hamlet and village in the country" as a military map maker, in *Thoi-Bao Ga,* Nov., 1969, 76a Pleasant St., Cambridge, Mass., a monthly publication of Vietnamese students in the United States. He describes how defoliation has been used since 1961 to drive peasants into government controlled camps, and from his own experience and published records in Vietnam, he records some of the effects: starvation, death, hideously deformed babies. He quotes the head of the Agronomy Section of the Japan Science Council who claims that by 1967 about half the arable land had been seriously affected. For American estimates, see the report of the Daddario subcommittee of the House committee on Science and Astronautics, Aug. 8, 1969. They estimate the total area sprayed through 1968 as 6,600 square miles (extrapolating through 1969 the figure would reach about 8,600 square miles, about 60 percent of this respraying—over 10 percent of it crop destruction).

To see what may lie ahead, I'd like to turn away from Vietnam to a less familiar case. It has been claimed that Vietnam is the second most heavily bombarded country in history. The most intensively bombarded, so it seems, is Laos. According to *Le Monde*, "North Vietnam was more heavily bombed than Korea; Laos is now being bombed even more than North Vietnam. And this battering has been going on for over five years. . . . The U.S. Air Force carries out more than 12,500 raids a month."[10] On the same day, October 1, the *New York Times* announced its discovery that in Laos, "the rebel economy and social fabric" are now the main target of the American bombardment, which is claimed to be a success:

> Refugees from the Plaine des Jarres area say that during recent months most open spaces have been evacuated. Both civilians and soldiers have retreated into the forests or hills and frequently spend most of the daylight hours in caves or tunnels. Refugees said they could only plow their fields at night because they were unsafe during the day. "So long as the U.S. bombing continues at its new level," a European diplomat said here this week, "so-called Communist territory is little but a shooting range. . . ." The bombing, by creating refugees, deprives the Communists of their chief source of food and transport. The population of the Pathet Lao zone find it increasingly difficult to fight a "people's war" with fewer and fewer people.

The world's most advanced society has found the answer to people's war: eliminate the people.

It is, incidentally, remarkable that the *Times* can so blandly announce that the rebel economy and social fabric are the main target of the American bombardment. It is remarkable that this claim, which, if correct, sets American policy at the moral level of Nazi Germany, can be merely noted in a casual comment, with—so far as I know—no public reaction of horror and indignation.

Still, it is good that the American press has discovered that the rebel economy and social fabric are the target of the American bombardment of Laos. Perhaps we will be spared the pretense that our targets are steel and concrete, or that the bombing

[10] Weekly selection, October 1.

is "the most restrained in modern warfare" (as McGeorge Bundy so elegantly put it at the time when virtually every structure in North Vietnam, outside of the centers of Hanoi and Haiphong, was being demolished).

The discovery has been mysteriously delayed. For example, in July, 1968, the Southeast Asia expert of *Le Monde*, Jacques Decornoy, published detailed reports of his visits to the liberated areas of Laos: "a world without noise, for the surrounding villages have disappeared, the inhabitants themselves living hidden in the mountains . . . it is dangerous to lean out at any time of the night or day" because of the ceaseless bombardment which leads to "the scientific destruction of the areas held by the enemy." "The Americans are trying to 'break' the Laotian Left, both psychologically and, if possible, physically." The nature of their relentless attack "can only be explained if the target is the central administration of the Neo Lao Haksat"—the political organization that won handily in 1958 in the only unrigged election in Laos. This electoral victory inspired the American effort at subversion that led to the Laotian crisis of the early Sixties, which still persists.

Decornoy describes "the motionless ruins and deserted houses" of the central town of Sam-Neua district:

> The first real raid against the population center itself was launched on February 19, 1965. Very serious attacks were made on it quite recently on March 17 and 19, 1968. . . . The two ends of the town were razed to the ground. The old ruins of 1965 have disappeared, those of March 1968 were still "smoking" when we visited them. Branches of trees lay all along the length of the river, houses were totally burned out (phosphorus had been used). At the other end of Sam-Neua, the sight was even more painful. Everywhere enormous craters, the church and many houses were demolished. In order to reach the people who might be living there, the Americans dropped their all-too-famous fragmentation bombs. Here lay a "mother bomb" disembowelled, by the side of the road. All round, over a dozen metres, the earth was covered with "daughter bombs," little machines that the Vietnamese knew well, unexploded and hiding hundreds of steel splinters. . . . One of the officials of Sam-Neua district told us that between February, 1965 and March, 1968, 65 villages had been destroyed. A

> number impossible to verify in a short report, but it is a fact that between Sam-Neua and a place about 30 kilometres away where we stayed, no house in the villages and hamlets had been spared. Bridges had been destroyed, fields up to the rivers were holed with bomb craters.

Decornoy reports that "American raids on 'liberated Laos' began in May 1964, therefore well before the Gulf of Tonkin incident (August, 1964) and the policy of escalation to North Vietnam (Spring, 1965). For this reason, Laos has, in some ways, served as a testing ground or experimental site." He describes the amazing persistence of the Laotians in maintaining and advancing the social revolution in the face of this attack, their "virulent nationalism" and refusal to follow foreign models, the schools and factories in caves, the prosperity of the rare villages that have still, for unknown reasons, escaped destruction. Finally he quotes an American diplomat in Vientiane who says: "To make progress in this country, it is necessary to level everything. The inhabitants must go back to zero, lose their traditional culture, for it blocks everything." And Decornoy comments: "The Americans accuse the North Vietnamese of intervening militarily in the country, but it is they who talk of reducing Laos to zero, while the Pathet Lao exalts the national culture and national independence."

No doubt Laos is still serving as a testing ground or experimental site, for the next stage of the Vietnam war, for our new long-haul, low-cost policy. If the American people will only trust their leaders, perhaps there is still a chance to crush the people's war in South Vietnam in ways that will be as well concealed as have been those of the Laotian war.

The secret can be kept. Americans know virtually nothing about the bombing of South Vietnam. To my knowledge, there has been only one pro-Western correspondent who has spent time in the liberated zones of South Vietnam, Katsuichi Honda —and I am sure that his reports in *Asahi* in the fall of 1967 are known to very few Americans.[11] He describes, for example, the incessant attacks on undefended villages by gunboats in the Me-

[11] They have appeared in English, and can be obtained from the Committee for the English publication of "Vietnam—a voice from the villages," c/o Mrs. Reiko Ishida, 2-13-7, Nishikata, Bunyo-ku, Tokyo.

kong river and by helicopter gunships "firing away at random at farmhouses":

> They seemed to fire whimsically and in passing even though they were not being shot at from the ground nor could they identify the people as NLF. They did it impulsively for fun, using the farmers for targets as if in a hunting mood. They are hunting Asians. . . . This whimsical firing would explain the reason why the surgical wards in every hospital in the towns of the Mekong delta were full of wounded.

He is speaking, notice, of the Mekong Delta, where few North Vietnamese soldiers were identified until several months after the Tet offensive; where, according to American intelligence, there were 800 North Vietnamese troops before last summer,[12] and, which contained some 40 percent of the population of South Vietnam prior to the American assault.

Occasionally such material finds its way to the American press. Consider again the Mekong Delta. "In March [1969] alone, the United States Ninth Infantry Division reported that it killed 3,504 Vietcong troops and sympathizers in the northern delta [and] senior officers confidently forecast that they will continue to kill at least 100 a day well into the summer." The "conflagration . . . is tearing the social fabric apart." In "free-fire zones, the Americans could bring to bear at any time the enormous firepower available from helicopter gunships, bombers and artillery . . . fighter-bombers and artillery pound the enemy positions into the gray porridge that the green delta land becomes when pulverized by high explosives."[13]

[12] "Before this summer, the enemy in the delta consisted mostly of indigenous Vietcong units and guerrillas, many of whom worked during the day in the rice fields and fought at night. The only North Vietnamese were troops and officers who led some of the guerrilla units. They numbered about 800 as against an estimated total of 49,000 Vietcong soldiers and support troops." *New York Times,* September 15, 1969. On Sept. 16, the *Times* reports that "for the first time in the war, a regular North Vietnamese army unit, the 18B Regiment, had attacked in the delta."

[13] *New York Times,* Peter Arnett, April 15, 1969. Arnett claims that only 90 percent of the enemy forces of 40,000 are recruited locally, giving a far higher estimate of North Vietnamese than the intelligence reports cited above, or others: e.g., *Monitor,* Sept. 16, which reports that in the early fall of 1969 "North Vietnamese troops in the delta doubled in number, to between 2,000 and 3,000 men.

Apparently the performance of the Ninth Division was not entirely satisfactory, however. "... in the Mekong Delta, U.S. military advisers at My Tho told a UPI correspondent, Robert Kaylor, that the government's pacification program was still being hampered by the effects of indiscriminate killing of civilians by U.S. Ninth Infantry Division troops recently withdrawn from the area. 'You can't exactly expect people who have had parts of their family blown away by the Ninth to be wholeheartedly on our side,' said the U.S. source, a member of a pacification team."[14]

In the *Monitor,* October 14, there is a front page story reviewing such efforts. It explains that "the proportion of the country 'pacified' has risen with the flow of peasants to resettlement and refugee areas," although the Viet Cong "currently are intensifying their campaign to drive peasants back to their home areas where [they] have a better chance of controlling them." The picture is clear. We, in our magnanimity, are using our modernizing instruments, bombs and artillery, to lead the suffering peasants to the promised land of resettlement and refugee areas, while the ferocious Viet Cong—mere "village thugs," as the MIT political scientist, Ithiel Pool, explains in the journal of the Gandhi Peace Foundation—cruelly drive them back to their homes. The *Monitor* article also notes that "Despite years of thought and effort, officials here are still not agreed on how best to pacify a troubled land. In those years, pacification has advanced from being a theoretical ideal—though inconvenient—to the more important but second-class status of being 'the other war' "—and a proper theoretical exercise for American scientists and scholars.

The *New York Times,* September 24, presents an example of how pacification proceeds. Northwest of Saigon, 700 soldiers encircled a village, killing twenty-two and arresting fifty-three. It was the fourth such operation in this village in fifteen months. As for the villagers: "The Vietcong are everywhere, they say, and will be back when the Americans leave." An American junior officer, looking at the deserted central market, had this to say: "They say this village is 80 per cent VC supporters. By the time

[14] Boston *Globe,* Dec. 1.

we finish this it will be 95 per cent." Such reports are hardly more newsworthy than a small item of September 27 which notes "that United States Army helicopter gunships mistakenly attacked a group of Vietnamese civilians 25 miles west of Tamky Tuesday, killing 14 civilians . . . United States helicopter gunships killed 7 unarmed civilians and wounded 17 others in a similar incident Sept. 16 in the Mekong delta." It is not easy to avoid such incidents as we try to ensure that the Viet Cong constituency ceases to exist.

In *Look* magazine, November 18, Foreign Editor Robert Moskin describes his visit to a refugee camp, which "tells part of the story of Vietnam's hopelessness." Its 3,125 refugees (240 men) were transferred to this "desolate sand-dune camp" in a military sweep last summer from an island that was regarded as a VC stronghold: "The rest of the men are still hiding with the VC in the tall grass." This is in Quang Nam province, where even the American officials in charge admit that the battle was lost "to Viet-Cong forces recruited for the most part from within the province."[15] With an honesty that others would do well to emulate, Moskin states that in Vietnam "America's historic westward-driving wave has crested."

With justice, "a staff major [of the America Division in Chulai] said: "We are at war with the 10-year-old children. It may not be humanitarian, but that's what it's like."[16]

And now there is Song My—"Pinkville." More than two decades of indoctrination and counter-revolutionary interventions have created the possibility of a name like "Pinkville"—and the acts that may be done in a place so named. Orville and Jonathan Schell have pointed out[17] what any literate person should realize, that this was no isolated atrocity, but the logical consequence of a virtual war of extermination directed against helpless peasants: "enemies," "reds," "dinks." But there are, perhaps, still deeper roots. Some time ago, I read with a slight shock the statement by Eqbal Ahmad that "America has institutionalized even its genocide," referring to the fact that the extermination of the Indians "has become the object of public

[15] William Nighswonger, *Rural Pacification in Vietnam,* Praeger, 1967.
[16] Henry Kamm, *New York Times,* Dec. 1.
[17] *New York Times,* Nov. 26.

entertainment and children's games."[18] Shortly after, I was thumbing through my daughter's fourth-grade social science reader.[19] The protagonist, Robert, is told the story of the extermination of the Pequot tribe by Captain John Mason:

> His little army attacked in the morning before it was light and took the Pequots by surprise. The soldiers broke down the stockade with their axes, rushed inside, and set fire to the wigwams. They killed nearly all the braves, squaws, and children, and burned their corn and other food. There were no Pequots left to make more trouble. When the other Indian tribes saw what good fighters the white men were, they kept the peace for many years.
>
> "I wish I were a man and had been there," thought Robert.

Nowhere does Robert express, or hear, second thoughts about the matter. The text omits some other pertinent remarks: for example, by Cotton Mather, who said that "It was supposed that no less than six hundred Pequot souls were brought down to hell that day."[20] Is it an exaggeration to suggest that our history of extermination and racism is reaching its climax in Vietnam today? It is not a question that Americans can easily put aside.

The revelation of the Song My atrocity to a wide public appears to have been a by-product of the November mobilization. As Richard L. Strout wrote in the *Monitor*:

> American press self-censorship thwarted Mr. Ridenhour's disclosures for a year. "No one wanted to go into it," his agent said of telegrams sent to Life, Look, and Newsweek magazines outlining allegations. . . . Except for the recent antiwar march in Washington the event might not have been publicized. In connection with the march a news offshoot (Dispatch News Service) of the left-wing Institute of Policy Studies of this city aggressively told and marketed the story to approximately 30 U.S. and Canadian newspapers.[21]

[18] In *No More Vietnams?* On the widely noted analogy between Vietnam and the Indian wars see my *American Power and the New Mandarins,* chapter 3, note 42.

[19] Harold B. Clifford, *Exploring New England,* New Unified Social Studies, Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1961.

[20] See Howard Zinn, "Violence and social change," Boston University *Graduate Journal,* Fall, 1968. When disease decimated the Indians, Mather said: "The woods were almost cleared of those pernicious creatures, to make room for a better growth."

[21] On Nov. 24. Attention, Mr. Agnew.

Apart from this, it probably would have disappeared from history, along with who knows what else.

The first investigation by the Pentagon "reported that the carnage was due to artillery fire. Civilian casualties by artillery fire among hostile villages are so common that this explanation ended the inquiry."[22] But the murdered Vietnamese were not the victims of artillery fire. Since the soldiers looked into the faces of their victims, the inquiry must continue, despite the difficulties. Henry Kamm reported in the *New York Times* that:

> The task of the investigators is complicated by the fact that last January, most of the inhabitants of the peninsula were forcibly evacuated by American and South Vietnamese troops in the course of a drive to clear the area of Vietcong. More than 12,000 persons were removed from Bantangan Peninsula by helicopters and taken to a processing camp near this provincial capital. Heavy American bombing and artillery and naval shelling had destroyed many of the houses and forced them to live in caves and bunkers for many months before the evacuation. . . . An elaborate interrogation and screening procedure, in which American intelligence agents were said to have taken an important part, yielded only a hundred or so active Vietcong suspects. Most of the people were sent to a newly established refugee camp. . . . Despite the extensive movement of the population and the military operation, the Vietcong remain active in the area.[23]

On November 22, Kamm adds the further information that "the number of refugees 'generated'—the term for the people forcibly dislocated in this process—exceeded intelligence estimates fourfold." "The 12,000, instead of being scattered in many hamlets where it would be difficult to keep out the Vietcong, are now concentrated in six guarded, camp-like settlements."

It is perhaps remarkable that none of this appears to occasion much concern. It is only the acts of a company of half-crazed GI's that are regarded as a scandal, a disgrace to America. It will, indeed, be a still greater national scandal—if we assume that to be possible—if they alone are subjected to criminal prosecution, but not those who have created and accepted the long-term

[22] Ibid., Nov. 29.
[23] Henry Kamm, *New York Times*, Nov. 15.

atrocity to which they contributed one detail—merely a few hundred more murdered Vietnamese.

Recently, a study of American public opinion about Vietnam concluded with this speculation: "... little reaction to the war is based on humanitarian or moral considerations. Americans are not now rejecting 'war,' they merely wish to see this current conflict ended. To achieve this goal, most Americans would pursue a more militant policy and ignore resultant atrocities."[24] We may soon discover whether this speculation is correct. Of course, there is sure to be a segment of American society that will not "ignore resultant atrocities"—namely, the irresponsible, loudmouth vocal minority, or those who are described so nicely by Colonel Joseph Bellas, commanding officer of a hospital in Vietnam where soldiers boycotted Thanksgiving dinner in protest against the war: "They're young, they're idealistic and don't like man's inhumanity to man. As they get older they will become wiser and more tolerant."[25] If a majority of the American people will, indeed, ignore resultant atrocities and support Nixon's policy of pursuing a war without discernible end, then this segment of American society may be subjected to domestic repression of a sort that is not without precedent in American history; we seem to be seeing the early signs today with the savage repression of the Panthers, the conspiracy trial in Chicago, and other incidents.

The fact that repression may be attempted does not imply that it must succeed. Surely the possibility exists, today, of creating a broad-based movement of opposition to war and repression that might stave off such an attack. It is now even imaginable, as

[24] J. Robinson and S. G. Jacobson, in *Vietnam: Issues and Alternatives,* Schenkman, 1968, a symposium of the Peace Research Society (International). This organization, following a script by Orwell, is concerned with a special kind of peace research: the question of "how pacification can be achieved in turbulent village societies," along lines that we have been pioneering in Vietnam, for example. The editor explains that the United States is one "participant in the game of world domination." It might be asked why scholars should assist the Government in this game. The answer is that the foreign policy of the U.S. has been characterized "by good-intentioned leaders and policy makers," so the problem, presumably, does not arise. But even the Peace Research Society (International) is not monolithic. It would be unfair to assume that the conclusion of the cited study is mere wishful thinking. It has to be taken seriously.

[25] Reuters, Boston *Globe,* Nov. 27.

a few years ago it was not, that a significant American left may emerge that will be a voice in national affairs, and even, perhaps, a potential force for radical social change. There has been a remarkable shift in popular attitudes over the past months, an openness to radical political thinking of a sort that I do not recall for many years. To let these opportunities pass is to condemn many others to the fate of Vietnam.

Is there an "honorable" way out of Vietnam—meaning by that a way that might be tolerable to the present state of American opinion? The question is important, for if the answer is negative, it may well be that the threat of extinction that Fall recognized will in fact be realized. It is important to stress this possibility, in view of the present mood in certain "movement" circles where it is a criterion of one's radicalism to believe that America has been defeated and that the Vietnamese will win. On the contrary, a serious person will follow Gramsci's maxim: pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will. There is not much doubt that the United States has the power to deny victory, or even continued existence, to the people of Vietnam. No one knows whether the present strategy of capital-intensive war can reduce the level of organized social life in Vietnam to the point where an American-imposed solution may, in its terms, be successful.

There surely is an "honorable" way of ending the war. The PRG and DRV delegations in Paris have proposed such a way, repeatedly. It is a measure of the Government's contempt for the American people that Nixon was willing to publish Ho Chi Minh's conciliatory letter, with the statement that it signified—in Nixon's phrase—"the other side's absolute refusal to show the least willingness to join in seeking peace." It seems that the intermediary in the Ho-Nixon exchange was Jean Sainteny. He was interviewed by Joseph Kraft, who writes:

> I saw Sainteny at the end of September, just after his return from the funeral of Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi. He had had a long talk with Premier Pham Van Dong. He was persuaded that the other side was prepared to accept a settlement that would include an independent and non-Communist South Vietnam set in a neutralist Southeast Asia. The obstacle to agreement in his view was that Hanoi did not have any faith in Mr. Nixon's claim that he wanted an agreement. On the contrary, the North Vietnamese thought the

> United States was still trying to impose in Saigon, by military means, a pro-American government hostile to Hanoi. M. Sainteny felt—and his feelings were made known to the President—that the United States could dispel Hanoi's doubts in two ways. One would be a formal statement that the United States recognized the principle of total withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam at some unstipulated date. The other would be by broadening the present regime in Saigon to include some political figures who were not die-hard anti-Communists.[26]

Corroboratory evidence appears in an article by Philippe Devillers in *L'Actualité,* October 24, and Averell Harriman has publicly stated that Kraft's report is consistent with his understanding of the situation.[27] Subsequent statements by Xuan Thuy and Mme. Binh in Paris provide further confirmation of the possibilities for a reasonable settlement.

Since 1960, the NLF has demanded that a neutralized South Vietnam be governed by a coalition in which they would have a fair representation. It is this demand that we have consistently opposed—not surprisingly, in view of the judgment of the American mission at the time, and since, on the political power of the NLF relative to that of the succession of puppets we have installed. When the full-scale American invasion began, Bernard Fall cited a remark to George Chaffard of *Le Monde* by a "high-ranking spokesman of the Front": "We have not fought all these years simply to end up by installing one set of dictators in place of the old." Fall added: "One does not fight for eight long years, under the crushing weight of American armor, napalm, jet bombers and, finally, vomiting gases, for the sheer joy of handing over what one fights for to some bureaucrat in Hanoi, merely on the say-so of a faraway party apparatus."[28] Despite the intensive American effort since 1965 to destroy social life in Vietnam, there is no reason to believe that the situation is fundamentally different today.

Nixon's speech of November 3 must be understood as a re-

[26] Boston *Globe,* Nov. 10.

[27] In a panel at Johns Hopkins University, Nov. 14.

[28] *New Society,* April 22, 1965, reprinted in Fall and Raskin, *Vietnam Reader.* Those who speak so glibly of "bloodbaths" might note his estimate that from 1957 through April, 1965, "over 160,000 South Vietnamese [overwhelmingly, "Viet Cong"] have thus far been killed in this war." Note the date.

jection of these possibilities for an "honorable" settlement, one that should be acceptable to a large, I should think overwhelming, segment of the American public. Nixon denied the existence of the PRG-DRV initiatives, and made it clear that we have no intention of withdrawing our expeditionary force or broadening the Saigon regime. The present Saigon regime, which exists solely by the force of American arms, is not an acceptable partner in a coalition with the PRG and would no doubt collapse were a realistic effort to resolve the conflict seriously contemplated.

Under these conditions, it is important to take note of recent political developments in Saigon. President Thieu has apparently abandoned any effort to construct a significant political base. Elizabeth Pond reports from Saigon that his new party "should be very similar to the Can Lao Party [virtually, a branch of Diem's secret police], as it is being directed by old Diemists, several of whom were Can Lao members." Thieu has been able to find no political base apart from the generals and the Northern Catholics—essentially a reconstruction of the Diem regime.[29]

One of the Hoa Hao factions recently left Thieu's party in protest "against the intensification of military control of the government in recent months—and the president's continuing refusal to deal seriously even with the member groups of his own alliance." Its leader asserted that the President's coalition "cannot do any good for the country."[30] A report on the non-Communist opposition in South Vietnam quotes Pham Ba Cam, a Hoa Hao leader: "It's not very healthy to be in the opposition in Vietnam. If you want to learn about the status of the non-Communist opposition, go to Con Son [offshore prison island]. That's where you'll find the largest gathering."[31] As Pond reports, "President Thieu's decision to organize an Army/Catholic party—at this time and in this manner—sets the course for in-

[29] *Monitor,* Nov. 6, Nov. 8, Nov. 14. Miss Pond has been one of the few correspondents, over the years to give any serious attention to Vietnamese political and social life. In the past, her analyses have proven quite accurate. For additional corroboratory information, see D. Gareth Porter, "The Diemist restoration," *Commonweal,* July 11, 1969.

[30] John Woodruff, Baltimore *Sun,* Oct. 25.

[31] Terence Smith, *New York Times,* dateline Oct. 24. The scale and character of forceful repression of dissent in South Vietnam have been amply reported. See, for example, Herman and Duboff, op. cit. and references therein.

creasing isolation of the Saigon regime." It is a decision "to maintain the narrow interests and power of the existing military oligarchy as long as possible."

This narrowing of the base of the Saigon regime reflects the political realities of South Vietnam. It also reflects a rational political judgment on the part of General Thieu:

> As Vietnamese sources analyze President Thieu's thinking, he is calculating that the U.S. cannot afford to lose the war and is therefore stuck here almost no matter what Saigon does. The U.S. might dare, it is reasoned, to abandon the Thieu regime within a year or so, but it would never dare to destroy the South Vietnamese Army. If President Thieu links his destiny inextricably to that of the Army, then, he may figure that the U.S. cannot depose him.[32]

Thus current political developments confirm, once again, the failure of the American military to create a workable Quisling regime in the manner of the Russians in Czechoslovakia or the Germans in much of occupied Europe. The consequences of this situation are summarized adequately by Jacques Decornoy: "Under these conditions, a military solution may be a task for several decades, supposing, that is, that there still remain Vietnamese to fight and Americans to accept a conflict without end and without hope."[33]

Twenty years ago the People's Republic of China was founded. Just a few months earlier, Dean Acheson had formed a committee to reassess American policy in Asia, now that China was "lost." The committee was to operate under this instruction: "You will please take it as your assumption that it is a fundamental decision of American policy that the United States does not intend to permit further extension of Communist domination on the continent of Asia or in the Southeast Asia area. . . ."[34] Acheson made his thoughts more precise, shortly afterward, when writing on the Soviet threat: "It is not only the threat of direct military attack which must be considered, but also that of con-

[32] Pond, Nov. 6.

[33] *Le Monde diplomatique,* November.

[34] Memorandum from Acheson to Philip Jessup, cited by Gabriel Kolko, *Roots of American Foreign Policy* (Beacon Press, 1969), p. 95.

quest by default, by pressure, by persuasion, by subversion, by 'neutralism'. . . ."[35]

In May, 1950, Acheson announced that economic aid and military equipment would be sent to the French in Indochina "in order to assist them in restoring stability." Not long after, the State Department explained our support for French imperialism in Indochina in these terms: ". . . the fall of Indochina . . . would be taken by many as a sign that the force of communism is irresistible and would lead to an attitude of defeatism. . . . Communist forces there must be decisively conquered down to the last pocket of resistance"—in the name of French imperialism.[36] The "much-needed rice, rubber, and tin" were also cited as a justification for our support for the French in their ill-fated effort to reconquer their former colony. Upon their failure, we took over management of the enterprise directly.

In 1955 the Communist threat was defined, very perceptively, in an extensive study of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the National Planning Association, *The Political Economy of American Foreign Policy,* a study that involved a representative segment of the tiny elite that largely determines foreign policy, whoever is technically in office. The primary threat of Communism is the economic transformation of the Communist powers "in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West." Communism, in short, reduces the "willingness and ability" of underdeveloped countries to function in the world capitalist economy in the manner of the Philippines—to take a classic Asian example—where:

> Their economy has for nearly half a century been deliberately geared into that of the United States to an extent which caused Mr. McNutt, in testifying as High Commissioner, to say that "our businessmen and our statesmen in past years allowed the Philippines to become a complete economic dependency of the United States to a greater degree than any single State of the Union is economically dependent on the rest of the United States."[37]

[35] Cited by Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War 1945–1966* (Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 102.

[36] *Ibid.,* p. 116.

[37] Rupert Emerson, in J. C. Vincent, ed., *America's Future in the Pacific,* 1947.

Since then, there has been little substantive change in what UN ambassador Salvador Lopez calls the classic colonial economy of the Philippines. To be sure, we have bequeathed them the blessings of democracy. As Tillman Durdin accurately describes this legacy of half a century of colonial domination: "Filipinos view elections as a confirmation of the power of the wealthy business and landed interests who back both parties but usually pick the winners before Election Day and quietly give them the most support. In this case they picked President Marcos."[38] And in gratitude, the Filipinos have helped us in our war in Vietnam, in the manner explained in a recent report of the Symington subcommittee. William Selover summarized this report in a recent *Monitor*:

> The hearings showed, for example, that the U.S. taxpayer has been paying for the Philippine troop commitment in Vietnam. It has also shown that, without this payment, the Philippines would not have sent a single man to help the U.S. in Vietnam. . . . Administration officials admitted paying the Philippines some $40 million to send the troops to Vietnam.[39]

Still more revealing is the stated purpose of the U.S. military commitment to the Philippines. Selover reports Lt. Gen. Robert H. Warren's admission that the commitment was designed partly "to maintain internal security and stability and, thereby, make our own activities over there more secure." Senator Symington put it succinctly, with General Warren's reluctant assent: "In other words we are paying the Philippine Government to protect us from the Philippine people who do not agree with policies of the government or do not like Americans." Pentagon officials admitted in the hearings that "the only real threat that the Philippines faces . . . [is] . . . internal subversion." The threat is related, perhaps, to the fact that for most of the population, living standards have not materially changed since the Spanish occupation.

[38] Commenting on the recent elections, *New York Times*, Nov. 16, 1969. For some discussion of Philippine politics, see Onofre Corpuz, *The Philippines*, Prentice-Hall, 1965.

[39] Nov. 28, 1969: "From the hearings it is learned that the U.S. paid South Korea and Thailand as well to send their troops to Vietnam in a show of solidarity." This was somewhat more expensive. According to the *Times*, Dec. 1, the bribe to Thailand amounted to a billion dollars.

It is this "Communist threat" that we have been combatting in Vietnam, where, as has frequently been noted, Vietnamese communism threatens the new order that we have been trying to construct in Asia with Japan as junior partner, linked to Asia by essentially colonial relationships. As President Eisenhower expressed it:

> One of Japan's greatest opportunities for increased trade lies in a free and developing Southeast Asia. . . . The great need in one country is for raw materials, in the other country for manufactured goods. The two regions complement each other markedly. By strengthening Vietnam and helping insure the safety of the South Pacific and Southeast Asia, we gradually develop the great trade potential between this region . . . and highly industrialized Japan to the benefit of both. In this way freedom in the Western Pacific will be greatly strengthened.[40]

It remains to be seen how long Japan will be able to fend off economic intervention of a sort that is increasingly turning Western Europe into a dependency of American based multinational corporations, those "U.S. enterprises abroad [which] in the aggregate comprise the third largest country . . . in the world—with a gross product greater than that of any country except the United States and the Soviet Union."[41]

It is not likely that the population of the empire—the "integrated world economy" dominated by American capital, to use the technical euphemism—will remain quiescent, willing indefinitely to complement the industrial economies of the West. Seventy-five years ago, shortly before the American invasion of the Philippines in a war that was, apart from scale, rather like

[40] April 4, 1959, quoted in Harry Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, Monthly Review Press, 1969. On early American postwar policy in this area, see John Dower, "Occupied Japan and the American Lake," in *America's Asia*, M. Selden and E. Friedman, eds., Pantheon. He presents material in support of the analysis of "critical Japanese commentators" that "Japan was to be developed not only as a military base against China and the Soviet Union, but also as an industrial base supporting the counter-revolutionary cause in Southeast Asia," a policy that was opposed not only by Russia but also by virtually all the members of the Far Eastern Commission. See also his essay on the U.S.-Japan military relationship in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Oct., 1969 (see note 5). For still earlier background, see Gabriel Kolko, *Politics of War*, Random House (1968).

[41] Leo Model, *Foreign Affairs*, July 1967, quoted in Magdoff, *op. cit.*

our present war in Vietnam, the Philippine nationalist José Rizal castigated his countrymen because they were "like a slave who asked only for a bandage to wrap the chain so that it may rattle less and not ulcerate the skin." Those days are past. Those whom Marx called "the slaves and drudges of the bourgeois order" are no longer satisfied with a bandage to wrap their chains, and their discontent will lead to turmoil and violent repression, so long as we consent. . . .

conclusion

The Basis of American Interventionism

Michael Parenti

The United States is the greatest imperial power in the history of mankind. It deploys forces on every continent, exerts influence in every major region, and controls the essential material resources of whole nations. More than 1,517,000 of its fighting men are stationed in 119 countries. As of January, 1970, the United States maintained 429 major military bases and 2,972 lesser bases in thirty countries, covering some 4,000 square miles and costing almost $5 billion a year.[1] Every variety of weapon is sold overseas by United States corporations—vigorously assisted and subsidized by the Department of Defense. More than $50 billion in military aid has been given away by the United States government to some eighty nations since World War II. Two million native troops and substantial numbers of native police, under the command of various dictators and military juntas have been trained, equipped, and financed by the United States, and assisted and directed by Special Forces counterinsurgency units, their purpose being not to defend these countries from outside invasion but to protect the ruling oligarchs from their own populations. In short, much of the world has been transformed into an American-equipped armed camp to preserve the political and economic status quo.

[1] See the statement by Senator Mike Mansfield as reported in *The New York Times,* January 25, 1970.

In trying to understand such developments, we might consider how the "national" policies of any country are actually reflections of the interests of that country's dominant socio-economic classes. *"Class" rather than "nation-state" more often may be the crucial unit of analysis in the study of imperialism.* No government in the world represents the interests of all its people. When we say we have a commitment to another "people," in truth, we mean we have a commitment to a government that represents some special faction, some combination of partial interests within that country. The same is true of our own government: when we say "our" policy is such-and-such, and "our" raw materials and markets must be protected, we might question whether all of us are represented by the policies pursued by "our" government. In most public policies the interests of some prevail at the expense of others. Inputs and influences are not equally expended; outputs and pay-offs are not equally shared. This is as true of the governments of ancient times as of the governments of today. In 1919 the conservative economist Joseph Schumpeter described the imperialism of classical Rome in words that might sound familiar to present-day Americans:

> . . . That policy which pretends to aspire to peace but unerringly generates war, the policy of continual preparation for war, the policy of meddlesome interventionism. There was no corner of the known world where some interest was not alleged to be in danger or under actual attack. If the interests were not Roman, they were those of Rome's allies; and if Rome had no allies, then allies would be invented. When it was utterly impossible to contrive such an interest—why, then it was the national honor that had been insulted. The fight was always invested with an aura of legality. Rome was always being attacked by evil-minded neighbors, always fighting for a breathing space. The whole world was pervaded by a host of enemies, and it was manifestly Rome's duty to guard against their indubitably aggressive designs. They were enemies who only waited to fall on the Roman people.[2]

Such a policy can be understood only by ascertaining what "domestic class interests" benefited from it, Schumpeter writes. Those who gained were the "aristocracy of landlords, agricul-

[2] Joseph Schumpeter, "The Sociology of Imperialism," in *Two Essays by Joseph Schumpeter* (New York: Meridian Books, 1955), p. 51.

tural entrepreneurs, born of struggle against their own people" whose dominance rested "on control of the state machine."[3] "No administration in history," the historian Ernst Badian writes, "has ever devoted itself so whole-heartedly to fleecing its subjects for the private benefit of its ruling class as Rome of the last age of the Republic."[4]

The costs of empire usually exceed the gains. But the question is, who pays the costs and who enjoys the gains? As early as 1904 Thorstein Veblen observed: "It is, to say the least, highly improbable that the business gains which accrue from a well-conducted foreign policy ever, in modern times, equal the cost at which they are secured; but that consideration scarcely enters, since the costs are not paid out of business gains, but out of the industry of the rest of the people. The people, however, are animated with an uncritical persuasion that they have some sort of residual share in these gains. . . ."[5] Thus, over the past twenty years, the United States government has spent some two billion dollars for the defense of the Philippines, protecting what amounts to a half-billion dollar United States capital investment in that country. Such an investment would be considered a losing proposition by those who reap the profits only if they were the same people who paid the costs. But in all empires, old and new, the owning class monopolizes nearly all the returns while carrying a relatively small portion of the financial burden. *As with so many of the "social services" that turn out to be disguised subsidies to the business community, the profits of empire flow into private hands, while the costs are socialized and carried by the mass of taxpayers.*

The same is true of the "domestic colonies," those regions within the United States, such as Black ghettos, Indian lands, white Appalachia, Eskimo Alaska, which manifest most or all of the conditions of imperialism. Consider Appalachia: like much of the capitalist controlled Third World, the Cumberland region suffers from widespread illiteracy, underemployment and pov-

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[4] Ernst Badian, *Roman Imperialism in the Late Republic* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1969).

[5] Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Business Enterprise* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 217.

erty, low per capita income, low levels of education, poor health and social services, a high degree of absentee land ownership, and extensive exploitation of human and natural resources by outside corporations (mostly timber and mining).[6] Like other weak indigenous populations, the Appalachians have had their land swindled or forcibly taken from them, their labor underpaid, and their goods overpriced. The courts, company lawyers, state troopers, and National Guardsmen (the latter two groups functioning at home as do the United States Marines abroad) have been used repeatedly to maintain "law and order" and enforce the interests of the companies. The private investments made in Appalachia, like those made overseas, have been dedicated not to the development of the region but to the extraction of private profit. In Appalachia as in Latin America, more private wealth has left the area than has been invested into it. This should not surprise us unless we assume that the dedication of capitalist corporations at home and abroad is to philanthropy rather than to profit. Appalachia, then, is a poor region only for its native population and not for those who have owned its resources, controlled its labor, and extracted immense fortunes.

But, as with overseas imperialism, although the profits remain in private hands, the costs are socialized. The courts, the police, and the National Guard are funded from the public revenue even as they service a particular owning class interest. The misery of the Cumberland region is described as "the shame of the nation" rather than "the shame of the mining companies." "All Americans" are said to be responsible for the plight of that region, and all are called upon to give aid, but at no time are the corporations held accountable for the wreckage of land and lives and the other social costs left in their wake. Amidst much fanfare, a "War on Poverty" is declared, and the insufficient funds allocated in its name—as with most foreign aid—fail to reach the strata most in need of material assistance. Thus 80 per cent of the money earmarked for Appalachia's War on Poverty was used for highway construction.

It becomes evident that "our" government's domestic and foreign policies effect some strikingly different cost-gain distri-

[6] See Craig McDonough, "The Colony Within: A Study of Intra-American Economic Colonialism," *Science and Society* (forthcoming).

butions for different classes, and most of the common people of America, contributing their money and sometimes the lives of their sons to safeguard the holdings of the privileged few, may more readily be considered among the victims rather than the beneficiaries of American imperialism. The high level of consumption that is available to Americans, disregarding the quality of that consumption, is often treated as evidence that much of the imperialist in-take "trickles down" to the populace. Yet if empires cost the public more money than is taken in by the investing class, it is not clear how the propertyless classes gain even if *all* the in-take were to trickle down to them. It is clear that millions of Americans are taxed for services directly beneficial to the owning class while millions in the lower strata remain destitute. Since so much of the public wealth is expended in support of the military-capitalistic global apparatus, the common people suffer not only in the direct price paid in blood, sweat, and high taxes but also in the consequent neglect of vital social services, the decay of our cities, the colossal growth of our military, and the ever-increasing concentrations of power, privilege, profit, and property.

The burdens borne by the peoples of other lands are greater than the price paid by the American public. The oppressive conditions suffered by countless souls throughout the "Free World" need no detailed description. Although many western observers deplore the violence of social revolution, few have shown any outrage toward that combination of neglect, exploitation, and brutal repression so characteristic of the social orders of underdeveloped nations. Throughout the Third World, that small fraction of the population which owns, or otherwise benefits from, the wealth of the land, i.e., the absentee landowners, large merchants, military chieftains, usurers, sweatshop owners, political bosses, and bureaucrats, shares a common interest with American corporations in maintaining the politico-economic status quo. To the extent that their unpopular regimes are buttressed by United States military power, and their Swiss bank accounts and domestic holdings are nourished by United States funds, they, too, along with the investing American corporations, enjoy the largesse of the American people.

Most of the "nonmilitary" United States foreign aid serves

the class interests of American and native capitalists insofar as it is utilized as overhead capital in the service of private profit rather than used for social welfare. The roads built in Batista's Cuba with United States funds, as the economist Raymond Brown observed during a prerevolutionary visit, went almost exclusively from the sugar plantations to the refineries to the seaports for the convenience of the United Fruit Company. (Other American funds were allocated directly to Batista and his henchmen in payment for services rendered in "keeping the peace" and "maintaining law and order.") AID procurements on behalf of steel mill products account for approximately one-third of the American steel industries' exports. Government financing of wheat, rice, tobacco, and dairy exports is approximately 30 per cent of "our" overseas agricultural trade. American aid usually influences the recipient country's development, skills, tastes, and needs so that the dependency on American products continues well after the foreign aid program has ceased.[7] American monies are allocated to a developing country often with the express condition that they be used to buy American goods transported in American ships at American prices. "Foreign aid," then, is most often a thinly disguised public subsidy to American corporations and their cooperative native rulers.

Most of the nonmilitary foreign aid given to overseas governments is utilized for maintaining and expanding privileges. In Laos, where American aid per capita is higher than in any other country, some United States funds actually filtered through to the lower strata and were used for irrigation. "Unfortunately, irrigated areas then tend to be claimed as personal property by wealthy landlords who promptly turn the peasants into serfs."[8] Unaccompanied by any *political* program of social reform, American aid falls into the hands of those who have the power to command and distribute it, those least interested in change. *The insistence that we work for peaceful reform within the class system of an underdeveloped nation becomes a self-contradictory policy since that class system's first principle is to maintain itself against the claims of the deprived.* The alternative approach

[7] Harry Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), pp. 129ff.

[8] See Alex Campbell's account in *The New Republic*, January 13, 1968, p. 21.

calls for large infusions of American aid only after a fundamental change in social goals, class privilege, corporate power, and ruling native personnel, that is, only after a social revolution. But such a policy would be as threatening and unthinkable to American financial interests abroad as to the native oligarchs; both groups, after all, represent a common class interest—which might explain why they get on so well with each other.

If the common people are victims of their own nation's imperialism, why then do they hail Caesar, wave their flags, and march off to war? Despite their moments of doubt, the people want to believe, and are taught to believe, that their leaders are dedicated to the pursuit of policies designed to advance the general welfare. Calculations of self-interest are drowned out by the cries of patriotism. Appeals to national sentiment have a powerful pull on the common mind. Patriotism is the last refuge of the irrational; it feeds on a person's inclination to surrender himself to an all-encompassing transcending power that devours the individual while encouraging him toward vicarious self-glorification and violent self-assertion. Patriotism allows for the most naive and therefore most unrestrained expressions of collective egoism: "What a great cloud of dust we make," said the fly on the chariot.[9]

Patriotism also exploits the popular longing for safety and security, even as the ventures undertaken in its name create insecurity. When all else fails, rulers usually manage to enlist the energies of their peoples on behalf of imperialism by conjuring images of hostile hordes at the gates. ("If we don't stop them in Asia we will have to fight them in California"—a belief the policy makers themselves may sincerely entertain.) The ruling class is the first to declare the country in danger when in fact it is its own class interests that are being threatened. If properly cloaked in a nationalistic idiom, such alarms evoke a strong response. The people will support wars whose causes they little understand once they are convinced they are thereby defending hearth and home. The "national" interest and the "national" security became personal interest and personal security.

[9] The man who normally would be most hesitant to describe himself as "The best, greatest, finest person in the world," nevertheless would speak of his nation in such words.

For this reason, the dominant class interests of a capitalist society are rarely offered to the populace in naked form; rather they are enshrouded in values, myths, symbols, and images designed to activate popular support: "Freedom," "Democracy," "Patriotism," "Prosperity," "The American Way of Life." Take the widespread preoccupation with the "Red Menace." Anticommunism is deeply ingrained in our politico-psychic heritage, yet we must remind ourselves that Americans are not congenitally endowed with a repugnance for radical alternatives. They have been socialized into a prevailing belief system. Cultural beliefs do not emerge full-blown from nowhere, circulating like so many disembodied spirits. Beliefs are propagated, often quite strenuously, by the controlling agencies of a society, the groups and institutions that mediate the dominant cues and values.[10] In most instances, such agencies are dependent upon, and in the service of, those who own their material resources. He who pays the piper calls the tune.

Throughout our history the propertied classes have successfully propagated and rewarded those attitudes supporting the prerogatives of the capitalist system. Radical thought was, and for the most part still is, stigmatized and denied legitimacy as a system of ideas worthy of serious consideration. The endless stream of antiradical imagery issuing from press and pulpit, the bourgeois orthodoxy enforced within professions and schools, the harsh use of police and courts as instruments of political oppression, in short, all the means whereby a dominant class wages war against notions that challenge its power and privilege, have been utilized for generations by the dominant institutions of capitalist America.[11] In 1852, long before the Bolshevik Revolution and

[10] Michael Parenti, *The Anti-Communist Impulse* (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 57–62.

[11] See William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria 1919–1920* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955). Much of the literature on the American labor movement would supply ample documentation; see: Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1969). Discussions on the propagation of capitalist orthodoxy and the stigmatization of Marxist thought may be found in William Appelman Williams, *The Great Evasion* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964); and Sidney Fine, *Laissez-Faire and the General Welfare State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956).

"The Soviet Challenge" following World War II, Marx himself was moved to comment on the anticommunist dedication of the bourgeois class: "Every demand for the most simple bourgeois financial reform, for the most ordinary liberalism, for the most commonplace republicanism, for the flattest democracy, is forthwith punished as an 'assault upon society' and is branded as 'socialism.' "[12]

The 1917 revolution in Russia did not cause any great outrage or fright among the working people of America, but it did send a shudder of fear through the business class. Having few investments in Russia, American capitalists suffered no noticeable deprivation at the hands of the Bolsheviks, but they saw the revolution as representing an economic order that fundamentally challenged their own system. For this reason the business community could support American participation in the counterrevolutionary intervention into the Soviet Union though it later displayed something of a benign indifference to the emerging insanity of Nazi Germany. Unlike the Soviets, Hitler did not appear to be attacking the institutions of profit and property. The same might be said of the European bourgeois classes; the vigor and decisiveness with which they intervened against social revolutions in Russia, Hungary, and elsewhere were matched only by the vacillation, tolerance, and open friendship they displayed toward fascism.

To say that various *nations* intervened in Russia in 1919, is to overlook the fact that the respective voices of these nations spoke in distinctly upper-class accents. The "national" interest was defined from a dominant-class perspective. The owning classes have always had the capacity to think across national boundaries to the international realities of class interest in a way rarely found among the common men in most countries. For all the talk of an "international proletariat," it is the ruling elites that are usually most internationally class-minded. Notice the capacity for collusive interventionism manifested by the monarchs of Europe against revolutionary France at the end of the eighteenth century. All the bitter rivalries and conflicts that had plagued the courts of Europe weighed less than the aristocracy's own instinct

[12] See the discussion in Parenti, *loc. cit.*

for class survival. Notice how in 1871 Bismarck hastened to remobilize a defeated French army so that it might be used against the Paris workers once he began "to fear the impact the Commune might have upon his arch-enemies at home, the German Socialists. . . ."[13] And notice the candid class interest expressed by Secretary Lansing when urging Woodrow Wilson to intervene in Soviet Russia because the Bolshevik appeal was to "a class which does not have property but hopes to obtain a share by process of government rather than by individual enterprise. This is of course a direct threat at existing social order in all countries."[14]

The bourgeoisie fear revolutions in other lands not only because of the possible contaminating influence on the populace within their own society but also because they cannot countenance the continual loss of territory to socialism. As Magdoff writes: "Capitalism as an economic system was never confined to one nation. It was born, developed, and prospered as part of a world system. . . . Given this [international] network, it follows that limitation of opportunity to trade and invest in one part of the world restricts to a greater or lesser extent the freedom of action of private enterprise in other parts of the world. The dimensions of the defense of free enterprise therefore become world-wide."[15] That owning-class leaders have a clearer political consciousness in regard to their interests than have the unorganized masses of *their* interests, does not mean that well-to-do individuals are free of the popular jingoist sentiments. Businessmen have been known to succumb to chauvinistic fervor, even supporting ventures not always most beneficial to their material interests. No class can claim infallibility in pursuing its interests. Yet it should be remembered that in most instances, the owning-class patriotic sentiment does not represent an irrational dedication, since what passes for patriotism—that expression of "national" pride, prestige, and power—has been first defined

[13] Alistair Horne, *The Fall of Paris* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), p. 344.

[14] Quoted in William Appelman Williams, "American Intervention in Russia: 1917–1920," in David Horowitz, ed., *Containment and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).

[15] Harry Magdoff, "Militarism and Imperialism," *Monthly Review*, 21, February, 1970, p. 7.

from the perspective of a capitalist social order. The outputs of that national chauvinism, then, most often serve the material interests of the capitalist system. As Ralph Miliband puts it:

> The whole history of Western (and Japanese) imperialism is a clear case in point. It is certainly not true that these governments went into Africa or Asia *simply* to serve powerful economic interests. Nor did they embark upon imperialist expansion *simply* because they were "compelled" to do so by such interests. Vast historical movements of this kind cannot be reduced to these simplicities. But here too the many other purposes which governments have wished to serve in quest for empire have involved, preeminently, the furtherance of private economic interests. They may *really* have been concerned with national security, the strengthening of the economic and social fabric, the shouldering of the white man's burden, the fulfillment of their national destiny and so forth. But these purposes required, as they saw it, the security by conquest of lands which were already or which could become zones of exploitation for their national capitalist interests, whose implantation and expansion were thus guaranteed by the power of the state. In this case too the fact that political officeholders were seeking to achieve many other purposes should not obscure the fact that, *in the service of these purposes,* they became the dedicated servants of their business and investing classes.[16]

This dedication is often openly expressed, as when President Eisenhower observed in his 1953 State of the Union message: "A serious and explicit purpose of our foreign policy [is] the encouragement of a hospitable climate for investment in foreign nations."[17]

The point is not that nations act imperialistically for purely material motives but that the ideological and psychic motives, though perhaps embraced with varying degrees of sincerity and intensity by all, serve the material interests of a particular class. Of the bread and circuses of imperialism, the common people must be content mostly with the circuses. It follows that any critic exhorting us to mend our ways by moving toward an anti-

[16] Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 84 (italics in the original).

[17] *The New York Times,* February 3, 1953, also quoted in Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism,* p. 126.

militaristic anti-imperialist foreign policy must take into account how such a change could possibly be effected in opposition to the dominant interests of the American capitalist system.

The overriding concern of the corporate system is to maximize profits. Businessmen proudly proclaim this dedication as the peculiar genius of the system, the reason consumers are able to enjoy the never-ending glut and gadgetry of the commodity market. But the drive for pecuniary expansion is more than a preference of businessmen; it is an unavoidable fact of capitalist life. Capitalism indeed suffers from the defects of its own virtues. In the world of private competition, enterprises must expand in order to survive. To stand still amidst growth is to decline, not only relatively but, eventually, absolutely. The entire mechanism of a market economy—the accumulation of profit and the need to invest surplus capital, the need for strategic overseas materials and new markets, the fluctuations in consumer demand, the instabilities of old markets, the threat of recession and depression, the pressures of domestic and foreign competition—"force a restless drive of capital to expand."[18] The quality of public services, the quality and, indeed, the very survival of the natural environment, the quality and safety of commodities and commercial services, the quality and well-being of communal and personal life, the various values and priorities basic to human happiness, these are considered in the capitalist mode of production, if at all, only to the extent that they advance or retard pecuniary gain.

The attractions of overseas investments become evident in capitalism's need to expand and its need to relegate all social values to a status conditional to the profit motive. Imperialistic investments offer a relative lack of competition in the native country, the use of cheap native labor (usually without the threat of labor organizing itself into a countervailing power), the absence or near absence of corporate taxes, the marketing of products—even in the impoverished colonies—at monopoly prices, and the investment of a surplus capital that would only depress the profit rate at home or would bring a low interest rate in other industrialized nations.[19]

[18] Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, p. 24.
[19] See Schumpeter, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

As the practical limitations in investments are reached in one country, as the margin of profit narrows, while wages, controls, and taxes increase, outlets are sought in other less advantaged and more vulnerable lands. As Magdoff states:

> *What matters to the business community, and to the business system as a whole, is that the option of foreign investment (and foreign trade) should remain available.* For this to be meaningful, the business system requires, as a minimum, that the political and economic principles of capitalism should prevail and that the door be fully open for foreign capital at all times. Even more, it seeks a privileged open door for the capital of the home country in preference to capital from competing industrial nations. How much or how little an open door may be exploited at any given time is not the issue. The *principle* must be maintained, especially for a capitalist superpower like the United States, and especially when it is being challenged widely and openly. (In addition, who knows when some vital resource will be discovered and the particular open door will lead to a source of new treasure?)
>
> Maintaining the open door creates problems, some because of conflicting interests among the more mature capitalist nations, some because of the actual and potential social revolutions which threaten to eliminate (or limit) capitalism and freedom for private investment and trade. Hence, opening the door and keeping it open require . . . the strength and persistence on the part of the more advanced nations to influence and control the policies and economies of the less advanced nations.[20]

Imperialism, Magdoff concludes, is not a choice for capitalism, it is a necessary way of life.

For big business, the prime function of government has always been to advance the interests of capital investment and profit at home and abroad. Only a government guaranteeing the essential conditions of class existence would win the support of the dominant economic interests. How faithfully our government performs this task overseas is illustrated by the following account: In 1965, Robert Kennedy asked a State Department official to explain why the United States had decided to stop aid to the ostensibly progressive Belaunde government in Peru while at the same time deciding to send aid to the dictatorship in Brazil.

[20] Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, pp. 20–21 (italics in the original).

Kennedy complained: "What the Alliance for Progress has come down to then is that you [i.e., the native rulers] can close down newspapers, abolish Congress, jail religious opposition, and deport your political enemies, and you'll get lots of help, but if you fool around with a U.S. oil company, we'll cut you off without a penny. Is that right?" The official answered, "That's about the size of it."[21]

The growth of American capitalism from a weak domestic position to a globally dominant one has been accompanied by a similar growth in American militarism. Sometimes the sword has rushed in to protect the advantages won by the dollar and sometimes the dollar has rushed in to enjoy the advantages won by the sword. Most impressive is the way in which American militarism and American capitalism have kept each other company in their travels. It should come as no surprise that the corporate owners are the firmest proponents of law and order at home and abroad. In both places, the "law" is one they have written to support an "order" particularly beneficial to them. Through much of the Third World profoundly inhumane social orders are financed, armed, and supported by the capitalist government of the United States. Indeed, in places such as Latin America, the United States is the greatest "peace-keeping" force in existence. But it is a brutal peace, a peace without hope, dignity, or social justice for millions of people, a peace of misery, poverty, coercion, and exploitation. Those who would counsel "peace, peace" to proponents of social revolution at home and abroad might consider the context of militarism, power, and privilege in which they speak, and the quality of the "peace" they propose.

[21] Quoted in Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "The Lowering Hemisphere," *The Atlantic*, 225, January 1970, p. 81.

"In this book we examine some long-muted dissenting notions and heretical views about the intent, purposes, and unhappy consequences of American foreign policy and the interests that shape that policy. We explore the history of American expansionism, the origins and causes of the cold war – that most critical international conflict – the interests that keep the United States involved in so many places, in so many ways, and the effects of those interests on other nations. Then we investigate specific instances of American involvement in order to identify the stakes, the justifications, and the outcomes. Finally, in a concluding essay, I suggest an alternative interpretation of America's role in the world."

Michael Parenti
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